The world of film animation and comic art

Funnyworld

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The American child who does not know these characters leads a cloistered life indeed. See Page 34.

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FUNNYWORLD'S EDITORIAL
Interviews and Other Things

Transcriptions of interviews, especially with directors, have become a staple of film magazines and books in recent years, and FUNNYWORLD is no exception. Recently, a reaction has set in against this reliance on the tape recorder.

For example, Arthur Knight, in the December 26 SATURDAY REVIEW, after praising Kevin Brownlow's splendid THE PARADE'S GONE BY because it is "studded with footnotes that sometimes supplement, sometimes correct the information supplied by his informants," goes on to say that "No such passion for accuracy defaces the lower margins" of two other books. He notes that the editors of one book "have, in fact, transformed each taped interview into an article by editing out the questions, then sending the results to their interviewees for approval and correction." Knight finds a "danger that, without additional research, many old discredited movie myths might be perpetuated."

Pauline Kael, in the February 20 NEW YORKER, is considerably more acid: "The new generation of film historians have their own version of 'Look, no hands': they tape-record interviews. Young interviewers, particularly, don't bother to check the statements of their subjects—they seem to regard that as outside their province—and thus leave the impression that the self-aggrandizing stories they record are history. . . . Directors are now the most interviewed group of people since the stars in the forties, and they have told the same stories so many times that not only they believe them, whether they're true or false, but everybody else is beginning to."

I doubt that either writer has even seen FUNNYWORLD No. 12, with its Bob Clampett interview, but they might just as well have been talking about it. The peril in broadside attacks like Miss Kael's is that accurate, well-researched interviews—like the Clampett interview—will be tarred with the brush of "inaccuracy" precisely because they do **not** perpetuate "discredited movie myths." Directors have their partisans, who will condemn any history that does not give their heroes the seat at the head of the table. This applies to cartoon directors. For instance, I received this, about the Clampett interview, from a devotee of another Warner director:

"But I do believe a magazine has some responsibility to check the accuracy of an article, because students and young artists take these articles as having validity simply because you publish them."

And this, from another correspondent:

"This letter is not intended to discredit Clampett, but rather to show you that all the information given you is not always the complete truth and might bear checking out."

Not so strangely, neither of these letter writers pointed out a single error in the Clampett interview. I think that is because accuracy is not really their concern. They simply don't want their favorites to have to share the spotlight with anyone else. In the hands of such people, the demand for "checking" is not a demand for accuracy, but a club to be used against the competition. They no longer have to seethe in frustration when their pets have been slighted. Now they can accuse a writer or editor of inaccuracy because he failed to "check" with the right people—whoever they are. At their crudest, such complaints are thinly disguised calls for censorship.

(It should be noted here that a number of Clampett's former colleagues at Warner Brothers have written to praise the interview, and some have singled out its accuracy; one said, "It is extremely accurate, I believe, and this is in itself refreshing to read.")

Since some of the criticism has called into question my intelligence and competence as an editor, I think it's important to describe just how I go about preparing an interview for publication.

I edit the interview in the course of transcribing it, frequently rearranging the material and culling what is plainly dross. I check the interview carefully for inconsistencies and errors, using as my basic source material my own knowledge of the cartoons discussed. I check with other people only when I have good reason to trust their memories, since too many people in the animation industry clearly recall things that never happened.

There is a lot of fairly reliable printed material about the Disney cartoons, but a great deal less about the cartoons of other studios. Of the printed material about the Warner cartoons—and there is very little of it—only the copyright catalog is reliable, and even it is not entirely accurate or complete. A few interviews with Warner directors have been published, and most of them are of the sort that give good interviews a bad name. Too often, it is obvious that the interviewers haven't even seen the cartoons they are talking about.

For example, David Rider, in a 1969 FILMS AND FILMING article, quotes Chuck Jones as saying that Bugs Bunny acquired his name this way: "We had a story man called Bugs Hardaway and he was asked to design a rabbit for a cartoon before the war. Back came the model sheet with Hardaway's suggested character in a variety of poses and on the top he'd written 'Bugs' Bunny.' Somehow the name stuck and, with the removal of the possessive apostrophe, the character became known as Bugs Bunny." In some respects, that's simply wrong (Charles Thorson drew the model sheet in question, for "Hare-um Scare-um"—and yes, I've seen both the model sheet and the cartoon), and I doubt that Jones even said it; if he did, he was contradicting his earlier version of the same event.

Another example is a Tex Avery interview by Joe Adamson, published in a Canadian magazine called TAKE ONE. Adamson asks Avery how Bugs Bunny came into being, then lets him get away with saying: "Oh, it just came out of a cartoon, 'A Wild Hare'." Avery ignores "Porky's Hare Hunt," "Hare-um Scare-um" and "Elmer's Candid Camera," all of which preceded "A Wild Hare" (which was, indeed the first cartoon with the "true" Bugs). Adamson also lets Avery say, "We started making [Porky Pig cartoons] and continued them until we hit on the rabbit and after that, since I'm quite a duck hunter, we started kicking around a duck picture. What eventually came out of that was Daffy Duck." The first Daffy Duck cartoon was released more than a year before the first Bugs Bunny picture, and about three years before "A Wild Hare."

(Continued on Page 55)

AN INTERVIEW WITH

CHUCK JONES

Charles Martin Jones is probably the most famous living cartoon director, and arguably the greatest. For nearly a quarter of a century, he was a director for the Warner Brothers cartoon department, bringing to the screen such characters as the Road Runner, the Coyote and Pepe le Pew, and refining and developing established "stars" like Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck. His best cartoons are models of subtlety, precision and carefully expended energy, with none of the "mindlessness" and "sadism" that ignorant critics sometimes impute to the Warner cartoons.

Bill Spicer and I interviewed Chuck Jones in two one-hour sessions on June 4 and 5, 1969, in his office at what was then the MGM cartoon department. Before the start of the first session, we joined Jones in viewing an unfinished National Film Board of Canada film on computer animation. When the interview began, our conversation turned first to that subject.

—MIKE BARRIER

SPICER: With computerized animation, would it eventually be possible to, say, program two extremes—of someone walking, for example—and have the computer do all the fill-in work?

JONES: It would, I think, in a rigid sense. But great animation depends as much on the character and placement of the in-betweens as on the primary drawings. For example, take a draggy, slow walk by a tired man. If you have one extreme of the legs crossing, and being pulled along the ground, and the other extreme with the foot way back, and the following extreme with the foot forward, the in-between position is not in-between. Because the foot is heavy, it tends to stay on the ground. So you'll have several drawings with the foot very close to the back extreme, and then, in release, the foot will drag through quite quickly, to the center position, and so on.

SPICER: But could this be programmed with a few in-between drawings?

JONES: It could, but what you'd have to do then is make a programmer out of your animator. I'm not saying it can't be done, and I'm not saying it wouldn't be desirable to do it under certain conditions, but I am saying that the true animator makes different decisions on practically every movement. I think it would take him longer to do the programming than it would to do the actual drawings.

Unquestionably, computer animation is going to be a very valuable thing. I was startled to see that they could take what seemed to me to be two-dimensional information and turn it into three-dimensional perspective drawings of an airplane. That's pretty sophisticated.

SPICER: It would require an awfully sophisticated computer to actually do all those hundreds of in-between drawings, using reference points along the way . . .

JONES: I can envisage several areas where I'm sure it would be useful, just as Xerox is. For example, in "One Hundred and One Dalmatians" (1961), they had a hundred and one dogs, and in a couple of shots there were acres and acres of puppies. There the Xerox helped them tremendously, because they animated eight or nine cycles of action, of dogs running in different ways, then made them larger or smaller, using Xerox, knowing that if there are a hundred and one dogs, and if there are eight or nine distinct cycles, and they're placed at random in this rabble of dogs, no one will know that they all haven't been animated individually. You might say that this could be carried further. Say we're animating the classic walk of Bugs Bunny. We could simply refer back to that, if we wanted to use that walk another time, and call on the computer to print that same cycle of drawings, smaller or larger.

SPICER: Do you ever see the day when a computer might replace everyone connected with animation besides the animator, the director, and the background artist?

JONES: That may be the ultimate goal, but it would take a pretty far-reaching version of the computer. Right now, computer animation costs more than the traditional method.

BARRIER: How much has Xerox helped in bringing down costs?

JONES: I would say it helped Disney tremendously. They were able to bring in "One Hundred and One Dalmatians" for about half of what it would have cost if they'd had to animate all those dogs and all those spots.

Of course, only the Disney studio would think of doing a hundred and one spotted dogs. We have trouble doing **one** spotted dog.

BARRIER: I've noticed that there seem to be a lot more characters in the average Disney cartoon than in the average Warner cartoon.

JONES: Right. As you know, we used a

very austere kind of cutting. Our pictures, by and large, involved two characters in some kind of conflict, and there was a great deal of inter-cutting, so that on the screen at any given time, there was seldom more than one. Mark Twain, in HUCKLEBERRY FINN, was talking about this sleepy little country town on the Mississippi River, and there were posts along the covered sidewalk, and he said, "There was as many as one loafer leaning against each post." So I think we used as many as one character in most of our scenes. In "The Phantom Tollbooth," however, we have some pretty elegant crowd scenes, and I'd say that was two-or-more-character picture.

BARRIER: Computer animation has been advocated for doing things in cartoons like rolling boulders, which I've heard are pretty difficult to do.

JONES: We don't roll many boulders except in Road Runner cartoons, but we use a great deal of perspective and we employ what we call the "telephone pole theory," both in graphic work and in animation. That is, say you have two telephone poles, one in the distance and one in the foreground, and if you draw a line from the top of one to the bottom of the other, and vice versa, a line drawn perpendicular at the intersection is at the halfway point. This is a very striking and startling thing, and I don't think many animators know this, because that intersection is so much closer to the pole in the background than it is to the pole in the foreground. The tendency is to put the line exactly in between, and that's one of the problems I think you would run into with the computer. But I suppose it would be very simple for the computer to understand these matters, and be so programmed. However, to me it was always fun to do them a little differently, a little more in comic dramatization. Since I'm in business to enjoy myself, I wouldn't call on a computer to animate my boulder.

BARRIER: I'd like to go back to your beginnings. You started with Ub Iwerks, didn't you? How long were you there, a couple of years?

JONES: The first time I was there was probably for not more than a year. I really don't remember. I started out as a painter, as everybody else did. Then I graduated to cel-washing, and inking, and then, eventually, to in-betweening. Then I went to Walter Lantz for a short time; these periods were all very brief, the whole time period that embraced my tenure at Ub's and then Universal and Oswald with Bill Nolan and Walter Lantz was less than two years. Then I worked for Charlie Mintz [Screen Gems] for a short time. I really wasn't sure I wanted to be an animator. I didn't see much future in it. So I went down to Olvera Street and had what you might call my hippie period—although then it was called a "Bohemian period." I worked on Olvera Street, this little Mexican street in downtown Los Angeles, doing sketches of people for a dollar apiece. Eventually I came to Warner's. I suppose that whole period covered a year and a half or two years. In 1933, I went to Warner's as an assistant, and spent the next twenty-eight years there.

BARRIER: What kind of man was Leon Schlesinger? Did he exercise any artistic control at all over the cartoons?

JONES: No. We had two kinds of producers. I won't go into who the other one was, you can figure it out for yourself, but he was a sort of prototype of Mister Magoo.[1] But Schlesinger was absolutely out for money and he didn't

care how he got it. He was very lazy, in the sense that he never bothered us. He didn't want to have to make artistic decisions, he wanted the pictures to go out and play and make money. That was fine with me, I was very happy to have it that way. The only time he'd look at a picture was when it was finished, and if he didn't like it he might get around to saying, "Four more pictures like that, boy, and you're out." One time he bought a yacht from Richard Arlen and named it the Merry Melody. We asked when he was going to take us for a ride on his boat, and he said, "I don't want any poor people on my boat." Of course, he was the reason we were poor. We were grossly underpaid, but we still did what we wanted to do. Daffy's voice and Sylvester's voice, which are the same voice, really, except that Daffy's is speeded up a little, are really very similar to Leon Schlesinger's voice, because Leon too lisped when he talked.

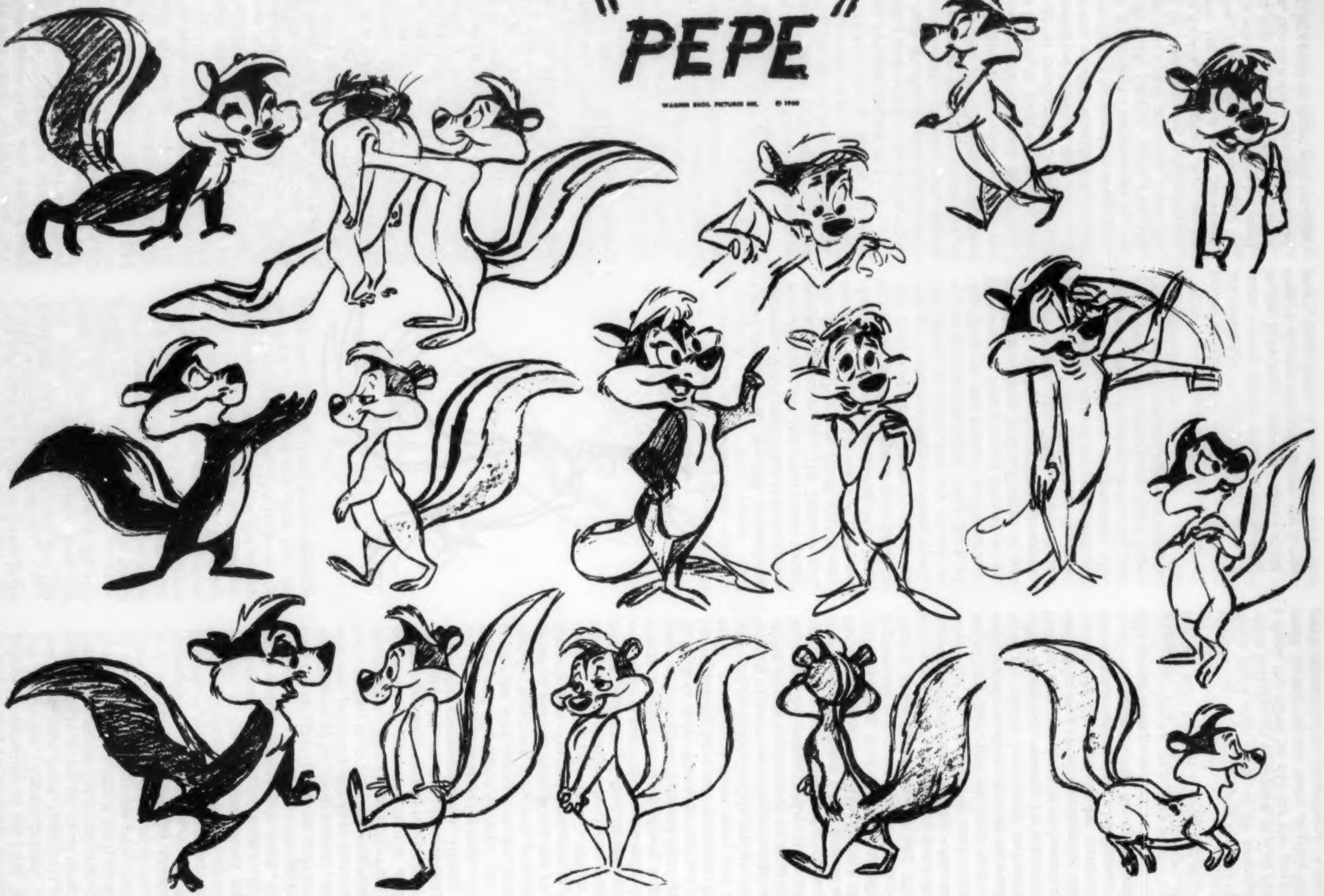
He was a darling; he was so pure. He had other interests; he owned Pacific Art and Title, which today is the biggest art and title company in the industry. He didn't do the titles himself, but the same thing happened there, he put the necessary money into it. He helped underwrite "The Jazz Singer." He was related remotely to the Warner brothers—a cousin or something—and he had some money, and at the time of "The Jazz Singer" the Warners were so hard up they needed anything they could get. Of course, when "The Jazz Singer" hit, they became very close. He was the man who underwrote Harman and Ising; that's where Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies really all started.

Anyway, he exerted no artistic control at all. He had a man working for him named Ray Katz, who was the production manager and who gumshoed around trying to run the place, but who knew practically nothing about the business. He really didn't know what was going on there. He was a very nice man, as it turned out, but he tried to preserve this air of being mean. The building where we worked was very long, like a string of stables; it was where the first Vitagraph sound pictures had been made, and it hadn't been changed when we moved in. Ray was always catching people asleep or reading the newspaper. One animator had the worst kind of insomnia—he couldn't sleep at work. He had an office with an open door—all the doors were open, and he could see Ray walking down the hall. One of the other animators was an electronic wizard, so he rigged up a whole electric light system throughout the building, and every animator, back under his desk, had a little red light. When Ray would start down the hall, this fellow would press a button, and all the lights would go on, and everybody would snap to attention. Everybody, that is, except writers and directors, who all worked in adjoining rooms. What they did when the lights went on was to **stop** working. For a year and a half, Ray never caught a director or a writer working. He'd walk into a room, and one would be polishing his shoes, another would be reading a newspaper, another would be sleeping, and there wouldn't be anything on the storyboards. Ray was embarrassed and didn't know what to do about these people, because they were kind of outside his little area. So, he'd walk back down the hall and the writers would go back to work and the animators would go back to sleep. He'd come back, and the directors and storymen were doing exactly what they had been doing before; the fellow who had been shining his shoes an hour earlier would still be shining his shoes. This was very puzzling. One time when he'd leave, the men would pull out all the work that had been done, and completely cover the

(1) Jones' reference is to Edward Selzer (1893-1970). Selzer was director of publicity for the Warner studio from 1933 to 1937, and head of the trailer and title department from 1937 until 1944, when Leon Schlesinger (1884-1949) sold out to Warner's. Selzer became president of Warner Brothers Cartoons, Inc., until that subsidiary was dissolved in July 1955 and merged with the parent company.

A Pepe' le Pew model sheet; the poses are from "Louvre Come Back to Me." Copyright © by Warner Brothers.

"PEPE"



storyboards with material they had hidden in their desks. So he'd come back, and they were doing what they'd been doing before, but now the whole damned place would be covered with story sketches. As I've said, he was too embarrassed to ask anybody what had happened.

The other (anonymous) producer's attitude toward animation was that laughter didn't play any part in it. He once came in on a bunch of us when we were just sitting around talking and laughing. When we looked up, there he was, standing in the doorway smoldering, and he said, "What the hell has all this laughter got to do with making animated cartoons?" That was one of his classic lines. The first time I met him, we were sitting in the theater looking at a cartoon, and he said, "There's something new take it out." One sentence, no comma. Also, he aggravated me in quite a different manner. He said Pepe' le Pew wasn't funny, no one would go for that bastardized French, or whatever he called it. Nevertheless, when "For Scent-imental Reasons" (1949) won the Academy Award, he went up and took the Oscar as producer. Our unit won two that year—the other was for a documentary, "So Much for So Little"—and he took them both.

BARRIER: Was there ever any thought while you were at Warner's of making feature cartoons?

JONES: No. When Schlesinger first saw "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (1937), he said—this was another of his favorite expressions—"I need a feature like I need two belly buttons," or words to that effect.

BARRIER: Even after all the money it made, he still felt that way?

JONES: Oh, yes, because by that time "Fantasia" (1940) had come out and fallen flat on its financial face. He said, "See, I was right all the time, fellas. We'll stick to shorts. Hit 'em on the run, I always say. Put a lot of jokes in it."

BARRIER: I've heard that the Schlesinger studio back in the Thirties had pretty primitive facilities; for example, when the cameraman had instructions for a "camera shake," he'd hit the camera.

JONES: That's a new one on me; I'd never heard that. I would doubt that. Johnny Burton, a great talent who was in charge of production, never would have permitted such a thing, even if it would work, which it wouldn't. But it was primitive, there's no question about that. We had a wonderful cameraman by the name of Hank Garner, who shot the tests. He was a real primitive, from the swamps of Arkansas—we called him the "Swamp Rabbit." "Smokey" was also his nickname. He had what John Steinbeck called the "mechanic's thumb," and he could fix anything. The camera we used for tests was actually a 1904 camera, a wooden, box-like thing. But Smokey had this way, he could do more with a rubber band and a beer-can opener than most men can do with all the hardware in the world; a wonderful cameraman.

BARRIER: Back in the Thirties, the Disney studio was dominant; how did people at other studios look at the Disney studio?

JONES: With absolute awe. We didn't really believe we were doing the same thing. From the time of "The Three Little Pigs" (1933), most of us felt that, there was Disney, and here were the rest of us, just hacking away at the edges. We didn't consider ourselves in the same league. And today, when you look at the animation of a cartoon like "The Tortoise and the Hare" (1934)—I saw that just the other day—I really don't know how you

could improve it. It's still a smashing picture. I think you'll find that everyone was affected by the marvelous speed that was achieved in "The Tortoise and the Hare." That was really the breakthrough in speed. Up to that time, no character had moved the way Max Hare did. You see, the point about our films and the point about Disney's films was that our experimenting was never overt. We didn't sit down and say, "Look at us, we're experimenting." But think of the "Toccata and Fugue" in "Fantasia"; that was the first abstract film since Len Lye did his thing in the Thirties. It was the first of the abstractions to appear commercially. The "Baby Weems" sequence in "The Reluctant Dragon" (1941) was the first of the restricted-animation pictures, and it's probably the best ever made. You look at it today and you wonder why somebody didn't learn from it: when you use limited animation, use good drawing.

Walt represented something to this business that few of our people will acknowledge. There's a great deal of pontificating about what is happening in the European "Schools," and I think they're all very interesting, but the Europeans have been at it longer than we have, and they've never yet developed a School of animation of any kind. People talk about the "Zagreb School," but I just came back from Yugoslavia, and I know they're going off in all directions. The Disney studio did develop an identification, and as a result each studio, all of us, began to develop characteristics. Disney was to me what Harold Ross was to THE NEW YORKER; he created an atmosphere where animators could flourish. In so doing, he pointed the way for everybody else to animate creatively. He still is the most important man in animation, and not necessarily for the reasons that most people think. What's startling is that so many animators overlook the fact that Disney not only created a great ground for them to work, but he also was probably the first motion-picture maker to break the international boundaries. "The Three Little Pigs" was accepted all over the world, and no motion picture previous to that time had been able to do that. In international cinematic communication, Disney was the first one to break through. "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" was certainly the first feature to be internationally accepted. Walt was probably a dreadful man in many ways, but he was the only man who had the daring to even think of doing "Fantasia." When you consider the condition of the motion-picture industry at that time and of animation in particular . . . I admire these young people who are doing experimenting today, but it's about like Stanley Kubrick or John Boorman saying D. W. Griffith didn't have any meaning. Practically every tool these men use was invented by D. W. Griffith, and practically every tool we use today was originated at the Disney studio—not necessarily by Walt, but his men couldn't have originated them unless he had encouraged them to exist. I have a real quarrel with Richard Schickel over THE DISNEY VERSION. Calling Walt Disney basically a businessman is a complete distortion. That is as wrong as you can get, I'll say that for Schickel. **Roy** was a good businessman. Till the day he died, when Walt went out to Disneyland, and wanted something new put in, he'd tear out anything else to do it, because he wanted it in, no matter how much money the other thing was making. He was one of the few men in the world who was lucky enough to be a child, a millionaire child, who could do anything he wanted. A businessman was exactly what he wasn't. If the war hadn't come along, he probably would have gone bankrupt.

BARRIER: I've heard the reverse, that the war hurt him, by cutting the market for his features in half.

JONES: You're overlooking the fact that there were only three of his entertainment features in existence at that time. I think the films he did for the government during the war were actually what put him back in financial shape. Nobody

can say for sure. But I don't think it makes any kind of sense to talk about him as a businessman. I don't adore the man, but I know what he meant to all of us, and it's poor history to ignore that. If it hadn't been Walt, maybe somebody else would have done it, but you can mention any UPA picture ever made to most of the people in the United States, and most of them will have been forgotten . . . you can talk about John Hubley, and among the aficionadoes Hubley is very important. I think John is that important to many animators, but Disney was overwhelmingly important to the world. I repeat, he's the reason we're in existence, and we don't even have to like him to acknowledge that.

SPICER: What else didn't you like about THE DISNEY VERSION?

JONES: Schickel starts out with a non-scientific approach. I'm doing a book now on the diversity of living things with a professor at the University of California at Davis and another at Stanford, just because it interests me, and I've discovered that the scientific method is that you start out with a premise and then you try to disprove it. Schickel starts out with a premise—and a prejudice—and then spends the whole book trying to prove it correct. You can reach into that book and take pieces from it, out of context, and make at least a full chapter of nice things he says about Disney, but the overall effect is bad.

To me, the average book on animation today, Halas or Schickel or Stephenson, goes on the supposition that animation is only the modern European thing plus what you might call the palette animators in America, the fellows who do the little specialized films. I think they're doing very good cartoons, but from the public's viewpoint and even from an animator's viewpoint, most of these people simply do not have much influence. Does it take me to tell you that?

BARRIER: How did you become a director? How was the choice made?

JONES: Well, a man named Henry Binder was Schlesinger's assistant, and for some reason he thought I'd make a director, I don't know why.

It's my supposition that nearly all of us fall into the line of work we do more by chance than by choice. It'd be nice if it happened the other way, through destiny, but when I think about it, nearly all the animators of my generation, at least, were born or raised or went to school in New York or Kansas City or Hollywood. So, if I'd been born in Butte, Montana, the chances are pretty good that I'd have ended up a cowhand. If an Eskimo wants to be a surfer, the chances are against him.

BARRIER: Your first cartoon as a director was "The Night Watchman," which was released in 1938; do you recall how you went about making that cartoon?

JONES: Well, I was pretty scared. The writers had come up with a rough idea for "The Night Watchman," of a little cat who has to take his father's place as night watchman of the house. At that time, the Merrie Melodies were supposed to have a Warner Brothers song in each cartoon; that was their avowed purpose, to plug songs. Things changed later, but at that time they always had to include one complete chorus. We used this swinging version—which still sounds pretty good—of "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree."

BARRIER: Something that intrigued me was that the little kitten in "The Night Watchman" is a ringer for your Sniffles, who I guess came along about a year later, in "Little Brother Rat" (1939).

JONES: Yes, that's true. Charlie Thorson,

who was working for me—he was the one who made the first model sheet of Bugs Bunny—had actually designed Hiawatha for Disney, so he was instrumental to a certain extent in forming the Disney style. He infected our style somewhat. I didn't draw terribly well at that time. Bob Givens had come over, and he drew beautifully; he was about nineteen years old, and he was fantastic. My style, whatever it is, developed over a period of many, many years. Don Graham of Chouinard Art Institute was very important to me; I spent maybe fifteen years going to night classes with him. I was kind of a late bloomer as an artist, as a "serious" artist. By that, I don't mean that the work was serious, but that I was serious about it. I never made a dollar from drawings and paintings until I was past forty-five. So the whole thing was like discovering girls when you're forty. Most of the men had long since run through the whole idea of doing watercolors, but for me it was fun and it was new. I'd been to art school, but I didn't really have that much youthful talent. However, I found that whatever talent you have, if you keep at it long enough, then you acquire facility, and I think I have some graphic facility now.

But anyway, at that time, I needed help, and so Givens and Thorson were helpful, and I suppose there was a subconscious development of a style of my own. Charlie did the drawings of both the Minah Bird and Inki, who was very similar to Hiawatha, although a non-stereotyped Negro. But I designed all my later characters, and I had some effect on the earlier ones.

BARRIER: Something I've often wondered is how the characters were parceled out at Warner's—that is, who decided who was to make so many Bugs Bunny cartoons, and Daffy Duck cartoons, and so on, and as a corollary to that, whether the directors tried to co-ordinate their versions of the same characters.

JONES: The characters tended to be different in different directors' cartoons, a little bit, but we also tended to learn from one another. Actually, there was a troika situation with the three directors—Friz Freleng, Bob McKimson and me—running parallel. We were called directors, but we were really producer-directors, because we had absolute control over our material. We had to do a certain number of cartoons with basic characters like Bugs Bunny, but we also had specialized characters that nobody else used. For example, Friz used Yosemite Sam and Sylvester; I occasionally used Sylvester with Porky Pig, but he wasn't really the same cat. He was a well-drawn cat, and I enjoyed working with him. I did all the Road Runners and Pepe' le Pews until I left Warner's. So far as allocation was concerned, the distributing organization in New York would simply tell us how many Bugs Bunnys they wanted in a given year, usually six or eight, which would mean that each director would end up with two or three Bugs Bunnys a year. You had to keep an eye out for good Bugs Bunny ideas.

There were certain characters who evolved slowly, like Bugs Bunny and Porky Pig. Tex Avery, I think, must be given the basic credit for the character of Bugs Bunny, although there were a few Bugs Bunnys made before Tex's first Bugs Bunny. But Tex was the first to have him say, "What's up, doc?" and give him what you might call controlled insanity, as opposed to wild insanity. Originally, Bugs was very much like Daffy.

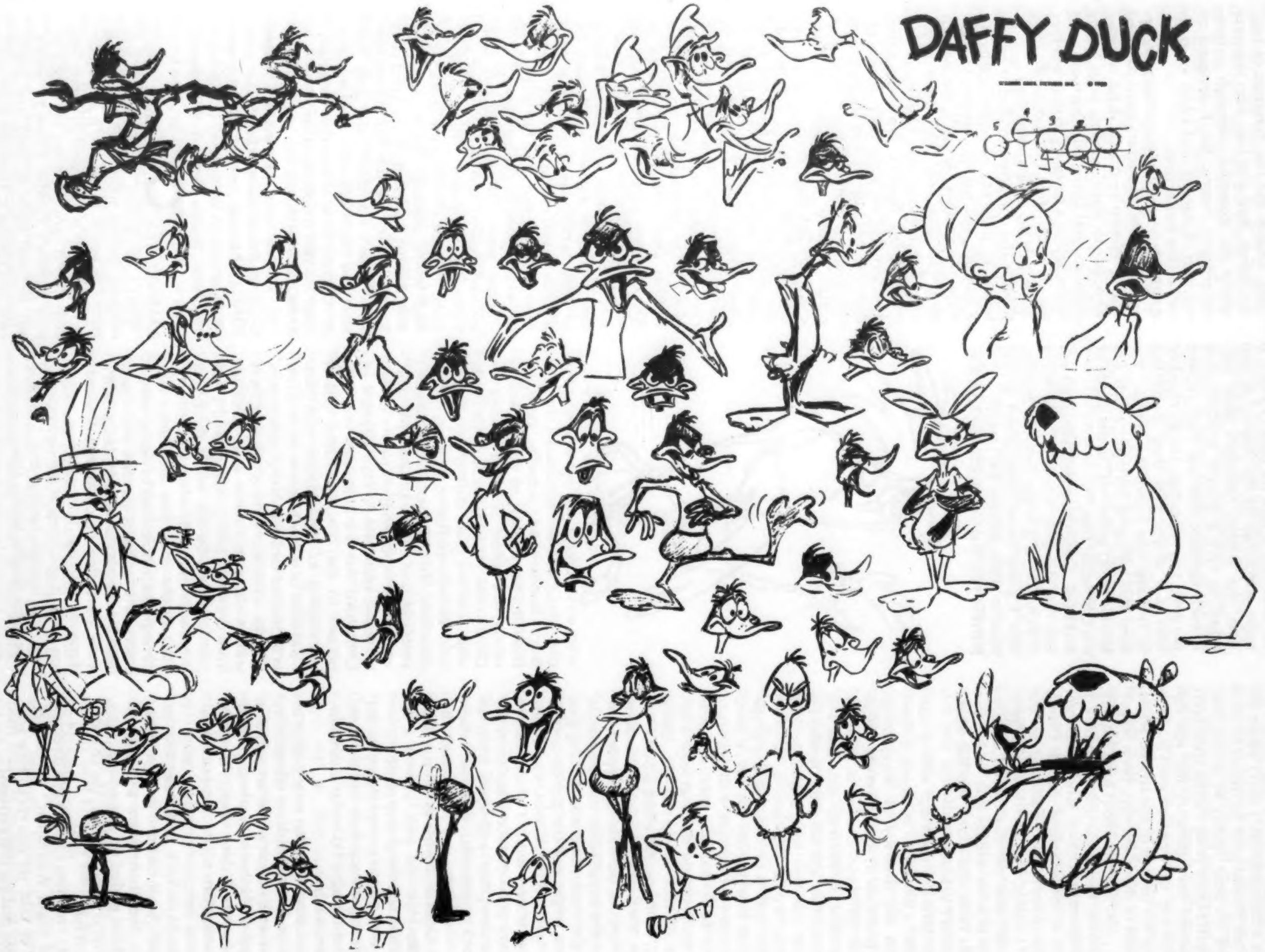
BARRIER: I've heard that you consider the rabbit in your "Presto-O Change-O" (1939) the ancestor of Bugs.

JONES: That was one of them. It was made before "A Wild Hare" (1940), Tex's first Bugs Bunny, but "A Wild Hare" really set Bugs' personality.

BARRIER: You had a cartoon called "Elmer's Pet Rabbit" (1940), which was released several months after "A Wild Hare." It seems to be the first cartoon in which Bugs is identified by name. The Bugs in that cartoon is like the rabbit in your "Elmer's Candid Camera," which was released early in 1940, and Hardaway and Dalton's "Hare-um Scare-um," which was released in 1939. Both came before "A Wild Hare."

JONES: I'm not sure of the chronology,

DAFFY DUCK



but the Bugs Bunny personality has to be started with "A Wild Hare." That and two or three Tex Avery cartoons after that really made Bugs what he was.

BARRIER: I've read in Bill's GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE that you used stylized animation in one of your cartoons, "The Dover Boys." Rudy Larriva said that it was done before the UPA cartoons, but along those lines.

JONES: Yes, it was made in 1941 and released in 1942.

SPICER: How was it accepted?

JONES: Not very well. New York was shocked. I don't think they would have released it at all except that they had to have a picture. Today it would go very nicely, and does, but it was considered then by many people to be a kind of breakthrough. I know John Hubley always considered it so. But the storyline itself went back to when I was a kid, when I used to read the Rover Boys book. So yes, that was an experiment, but probably my only overt experiment. I did a hell of a lot of experimenting. The Road Runner and Coyote cartoons are now used in many art schools to show objects working in space. Pure space. One of the goals in drawing is to achieve an object working in pure space.

BARRIER: I want to get back to the Road Runner in a little while, but still on stylized animation, I've heard that your "The Aristo-cat" (1943) with Hubie and Bertie the mice drew protests from theater owners who felt that they were being short-changed with an unfinished picture, because of its highly stylized backgrounds.

JONES: Really? I hadn't heard that. But the backgrounds **were** stylized, and we were trying for pretty dramatic stuff. John McGrew did the layouts on both "The Aristo-cat" and "The Dover Boys," and he had very interesting ideas that I was willing to try. (But if it failed it was my neck, not his.) "Fox Pop" also had stylized backgrounds. But there was a consistency in "The Dover Boys." The basic thing we did in "The Dover Boys" that was quite different was the restricted animation, which I felt was called for. I evolved a kind of movement, or pattern, from one extreme to the other. So I would say it was stylized, but not necessarily modern.

BARRIER: You left Warner's for a while during World War II, didn't you? Were you in the service?

JONES: No, but I made films for the service. That's where I met Ted Geisel [Doctor Seuss]. He was over here at "Fort Western," as they called it. If you were an animator and you got drafted, instead of working for Warner's you were sent over to Western Avenue and Sunset Boulevard, dressed in a private's uniform. Some of the more prominent Disney people became officers, and so did Rudy Ising, who was about the least likely officer who ever lived. He became a major overnight. He was the head of "Fort Roach." All the animators worked at either "Fort Western" or "Fort Roach," or out at Long Island, where the Army motion picture unit still is. I made most of the Private Snafu pictures during the war; Ted Geisel and some of the other Army people did the storyboards and I produced them at Warner's.

BARRIER: How many were there in the series?

JONES: There were about twenty of them; I did ten or more.

BARRIER: I've heard that you were somehow involved in the early days of UPA, with "Hell Bent for Election" in 1944.

JONES: Yes, I directed that, on my own time.

BARRIER: You never actually left Warner's, then?

JONES: Only once. When 3-D came in, we made a 3-D cartoon with Bugs Bunny, called "Lumberjack Rabbit," which Johnny Burton worked out. Johnny was a very creative technical man, who could do a hell of a lot with a camera; way ahead of his time, actually. He's now with Pacific Art and Title. John figured out what you had to do to make three-dimensional cartoons. Technically, you can't make a 3-D cartoon in the usual sense. You can get characters working on different levels, but they'll remain flat. That was when Jack Warner made "The Wax Museum," and he decided, I guess, that the entire world was going to wind up wearing Polaroid glasses. This was the whole future. He was a pretty brilliant man in many ways, omniscient, I guess. He decided that the animated-cartoon business was through, since it was too expensive to make three-dimensional animated cartoons, so he laid off everybody. He couldn't lay off a few of us, because we were under contract, but I didn't want to work there if none of my people were there. I called up Walt Disney and asked him if I could come over there for a while. He said, "Sure, come on over." I was there for four months.[2] I worked on "Sleeping Beauty" and the beginning of the television show. But I couldn't adjust to waiting for Walt . . . the Disney people were raised that way, and used to it. You'd finish a sequence, and then you'd wait, maybe for weeks. Five or six men, just sitting around waiting for Walt to come around. When he did come around, he'd already been there the night before when the plant was dark and looked at the boards, and everybody knew he'd seen the sequence, but they still had to show it to him as though he hadn't. Eventually, I felt I just couldn't take it any more, so I went in and talked with Walt. He said, "Well, what do you want to do? We can work out something for you." I said, "Well, you have one job here that I want, and that's yours," because he was the only one there who could make a decision. He said, "I'm sorry, but I'm afraid it's filled." So we shook hands and I left. By that time, Warner's had decided to start up again, because 3-D hadn't completely revolutionized the world. That was the only time I left Warner's until they closed it down again in 1962.

BARRIER: How much warning did you have that the Warner cartoon department would be closed down in 1962?

JONES: You could kind of smell it coming. Theaters were closing, and television was coming up, and Hanna-Barbera was doing all Saturday-morning programs. Friz and I had put together the Bugs Bunny television show for Warner's. We had produced, written and directed the thing together, the only time we really worked together. This method didn't work out too well, either, even though the product was good. It wasn't my fault or his fault, it's just that we were too independent, and had always been independent. It was obvious, with rising costs, that Warner's wasn't going to spend more than they'd been spending on shorts, and they wanted to spend less. They finally decided not to do any. They apparently weren't going to spend the money to go into new cartoons for television; in any event, they hadn't shown any evidence of wanting us to do that. So they said to hell with it and closed the place down. I guess you could feel it coming for maybe a year.

A Jones model sheet of Daffy Duck; most of the poses are from the Bugs Bunny television program of the late 1950s. Copyright © by Warner Brothers.

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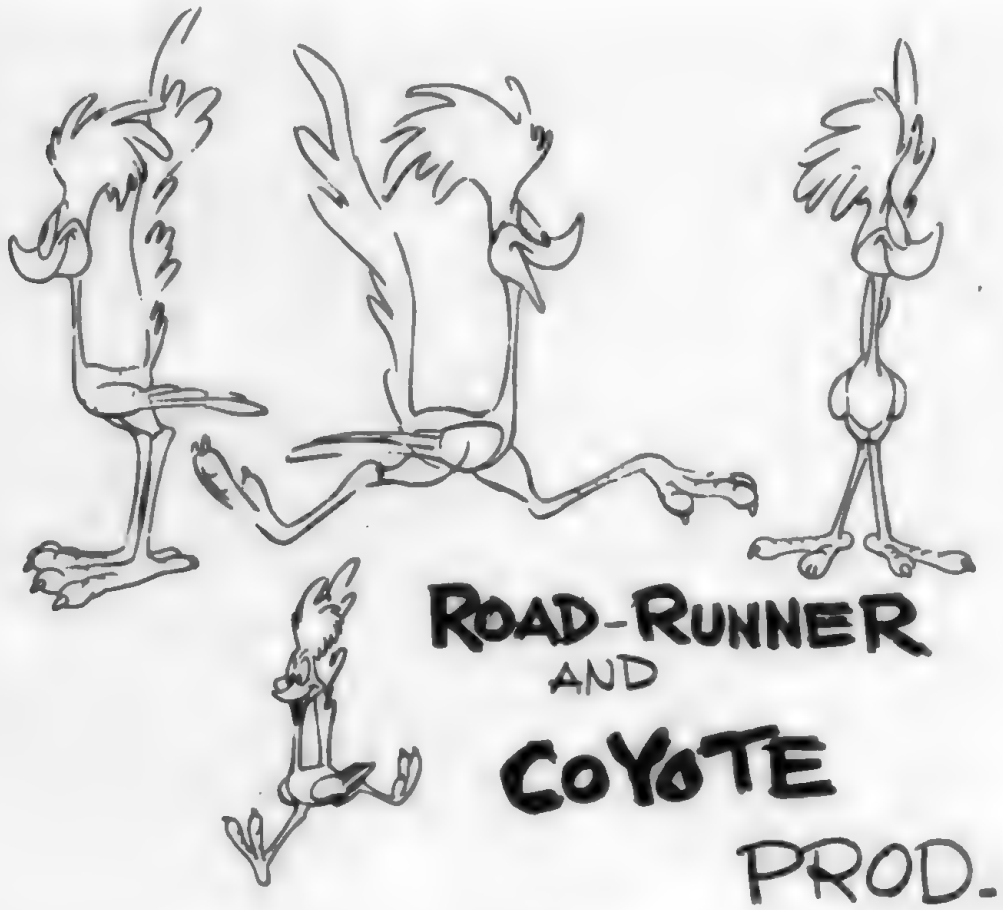
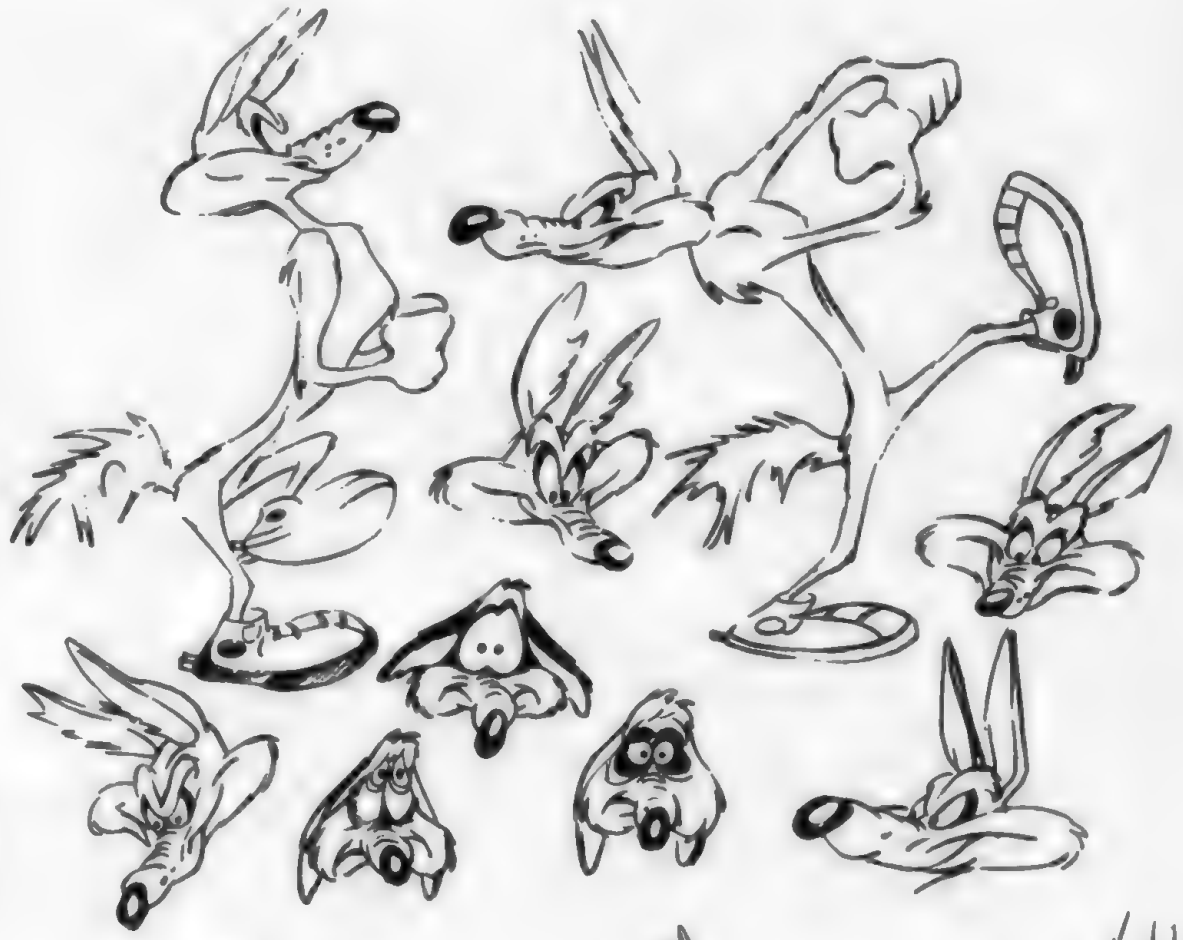
(2) From July 13, 1953, to November 13, 1953.

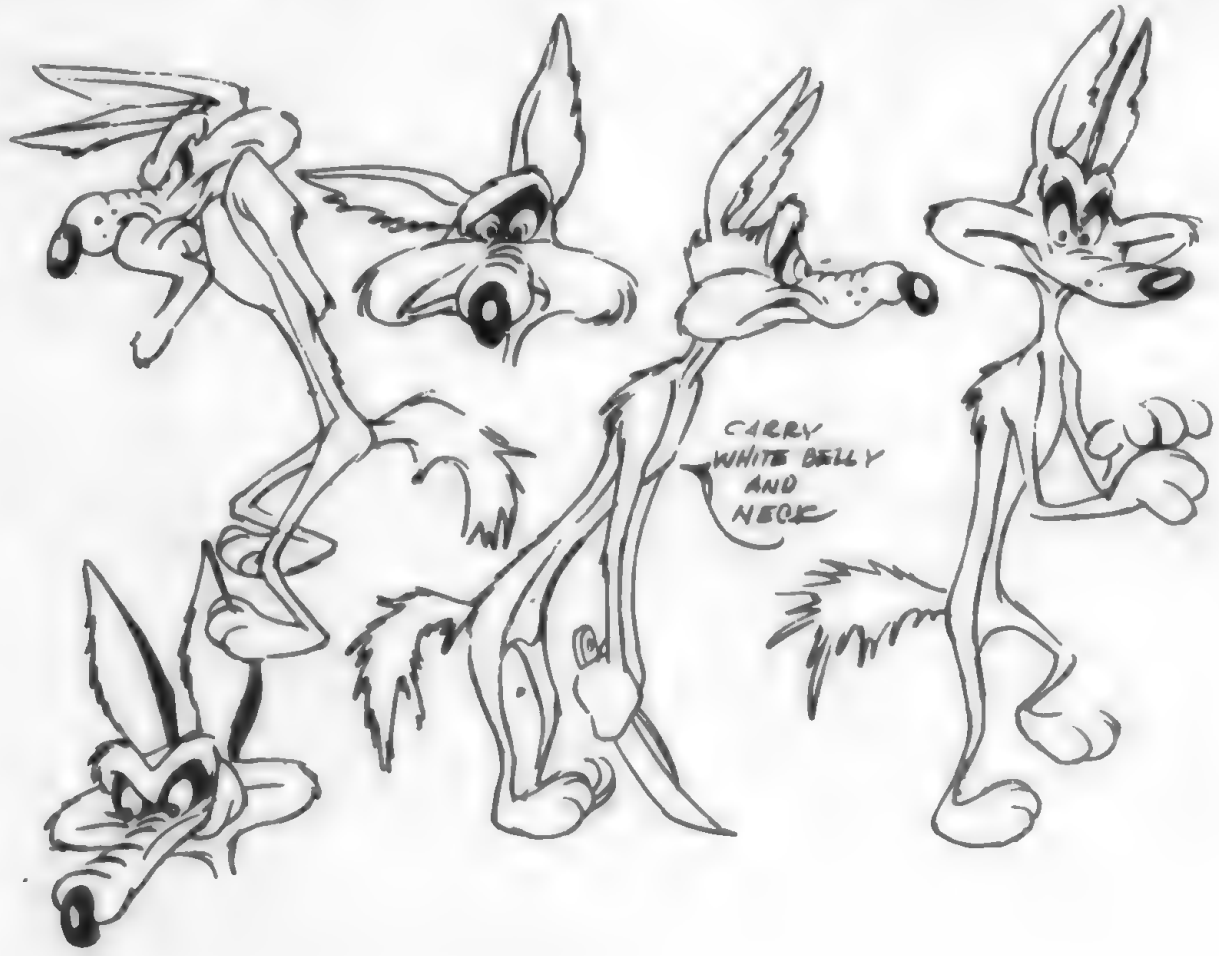
On the two following pages: the evolution of the Coyote. The model sheet on Page 12 is the first Road Runner and Coyote model sheet, with poses from their first cartoon, "Fast and Furry-ous" (1948). On Page 13 is the 1960 version of the Coyote, with poses from a number of cartoons, including "Hopalong Casualty," "Zoom at the Top" and "Lickety Splat." Poses from a Road Runner model sheet from the same year are scattered throughout the interview. All three model sheets are copyright © by Warner Brothers.

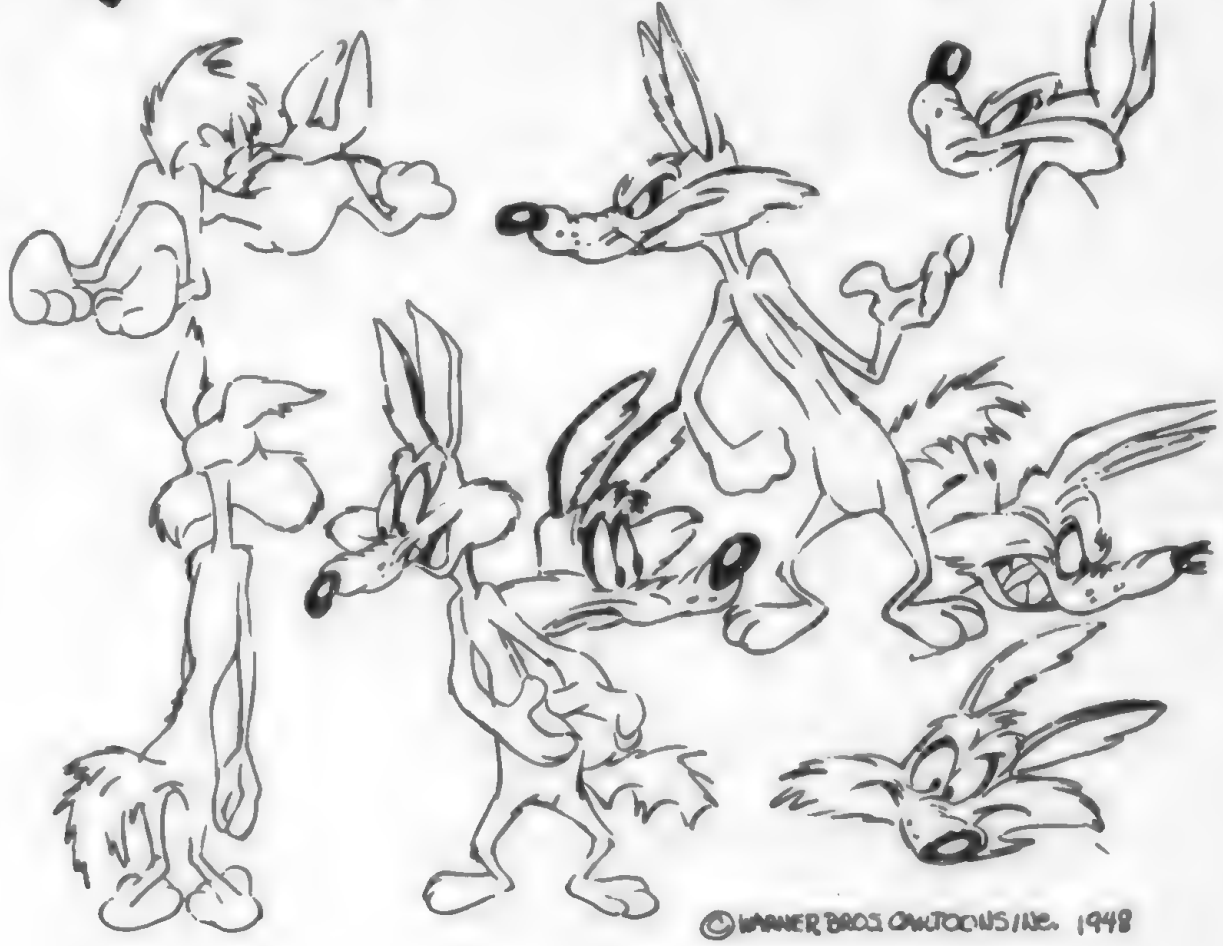


ROAD-RUNNER
AND
COYOTE

PROD. 1091







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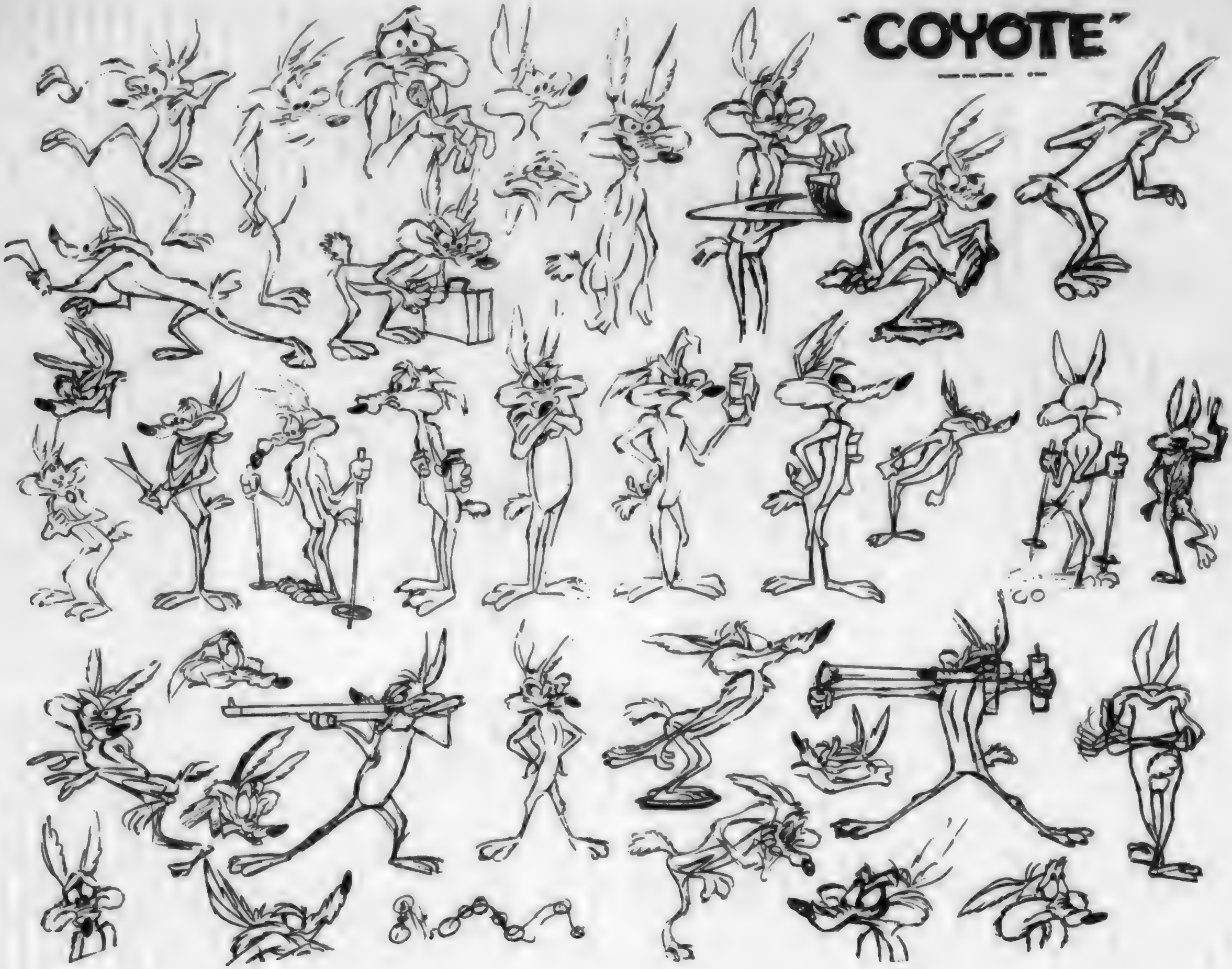
"COYOTE"



BARRIER: In your interview in PSYCHOLOGY TODAY [April 1968 issue] , you mentioned the disciplines you imposed on yourself, the very sparse leeway you allowed yourself on what the Road Runner and Coyote could do. Would you describe those disciplines?

JONES: The basic one, right away, was that the Road Runner was a road runner, and therefore stayed on the road. You make up your own rules as you go along . . . but having made them up, you must adhere to them. I think the same thing was true of Chaplin's movies, in that his costume did not vary. Marcel Marceau allows himself nothing on the stage except a couple of blocks. So, allowing it's a road runner, the first rule is that he only leaves the road when he's lured off, by the simple device of drawing a white line, or a detour, or something of this kind.

Second, the Coyote must never be injured by the Road Runner, he always injures himself. The Coyote is what all of us would like to be, a perfectionist in whatever we'd like to accomplish, and yet in the Coyote's case there's always a slight error; that's what usually happens. The Road Runner never enters into it, except perhaps coming up behind him and saying, "Beep, beep," which seems not too violent.

Third, the cartoons were set in the American Southwest desert, and although we used a lot of different styles in the pictures, in the backgrounds and such, it always had to be in that context. As we went along, the Coyote's primary enemy became not even explosions, but gravity. Since we were in an area where there are plateaus or mesas, we could give him all kinds of gravitational problems. Speed and gravity soon became basic factors in our series.

Fourth, the sympathy always had to be with the Coyote. The Coyote was never hurt or in pain, he was insulted, as most of us are when we suffer misfortune. I had my house broken into yesterday, and a couple of things were taken. I thought about it afterwards, and they didn't steal any of my drawings. Kind of a reverse insult. If they had stolen the drawings, I might have felt better . . . although I had an artist friend once and his burglar carefully cut all the paintings out and stole the frames, which is even worse.

Of course, timing is very important, and I discovered that eleven gags seemed about right for a seven-minute Road Runner cartoon, except for what you might call a "cumulative" gag. I hoped when I left Warner's that I'd eventually be able to do a cartoon where you'd start at the beginning with just one gag and simply keep going, all the way. (3)

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(3) In the PSYCHOLOGY TODAY interview, Jones mentions another discipline: the absence of dialogue.

BARRIER: A girl I know who's not too interested in animation referred to the Road Runner cartoons just recently as the "most sadistic" cartoons, and I've heard other criticism of the violence in cartoons. I wonder how you'd reply to such criticism?

JONES: There's no completely convincing way of replying. I think one question you might ask her is what she thinks of the James Thurber cartoon of the duelist lopping off another man's head and calling, "Touché!" Or what she thinks of the original story of the Three Little Pigs, in which the wolf, after eating the other two little pigs, actually,

goes down the chimney and is boiled to death and eaten by the third little pig, which made the third pig a sort of second-degree cannibal. All the Hans Christian Andersen stories, the Laurel and Hardy comedies, early Chaplin, the very things that I think she probably would adore. I'm curious what she would think about such "violence." When I lecture at universities, I find that people usually talk about this when they're doing a term paper on motion pictures and pick out certain things that they feel are indicative of black-and-white values. Or else they're graduate students in teaching. From my viewpoint, I did what I thought was funny. Sometimes it was violent, sometimes it was not. But I can't think of any piece of human drama that isn't one of three things: it's violent, it's sexual or it's fantasy. It's pretty hard to think of anything else that's really interesting. The important point is the difference between meaningless violence and comic violence.

What I did, I always tried to do for my own sake—I never thought much about the audience, I never made pictures for audiences—but for my own sake, I always tried to put a certain kind of logic to it. It's a natural situation for a member of the dog family to chase a member of the bird family. It's no less natural for that situation to exist than it is for this lady you refer to to eat a porterhouse steak. If she objects to violence, perhaps she'd better go to a slaughterhouse and see exactly how that steak came into being. One of the funny things on radio here is a commercial by an outfit called Farmer John's, which packages sausages and bacon. "Farmer John," they say, fattens his "porkers" (avoiding the term "pig") in the Middle West and then brings them out to the Coast alive, and then they're "processed" here. Now, "processed" means killing. Avoiding the use of the term "kill" doesn't really change the matter at all. We are carnivores, we exist on that kind of violence.

But I put down on film what seems to me to be funny, and I guess that's just about the size of it. There's simply no way to justify it. I believe that children—and many psychologists agree with this—find this a kind of release, providing it's funny. I don't much care for the Superman things. I know kids have tried to imitate Superman, but I don't think anyone's going to try to imitate the Coyote. And they can't imitate the Road Runner.

BARRIER: Do you see any line between the kind of violence you used in your cartoons and the kind of violence Hanna and Barbera used in their Tom and Jerry cartoons?

JONES: The distinction for me was that they would use a kind of personal damage. For example, Jerry might drive a golf ball right through Tom's teeth and all of Tom's teeth would break and fall out. To me, that's pretty painful. Now, the Coyote falling eight thousand feet and landing and getting up immediately, that seems to me to be a broad humor. Abraham Lincoln once told a story about an old dog who was sleeping in a stump while they were dynamiting stumps to clear a field. They didn't know the dog was in there, so they blew up the stump. Lincoln said, "Poor Rover, his usefulness as a dog was about over." Translated into other terms, you could describe the bloody bits. My point is, I don't describe the bloody bits. I don't allow people to be hurt personally. But all this sounds like an apology. I don't apologize for it. I apologize when I'm not funny. Because I'm a particular kind of man, I try to do my stuff tastefully, if broadly. To me, a character like Woody Woodpecker sometimes is wrong because Woody Woodpecker is not always provoked to do mischief. Bugs Bunny is always provoked. The Road Runner is a natural road runner being chased by a natural enemy. With Tom and Jerry, it was natural for a cat to be chasing a mouse. Bugs Bunny is minding his own business, he's in a situation that's natural to a rabbit, then somebody comes along who tries to deprive him of his foot or send

him off in a rocket, or take his hide away, or kill him, or do something like that, and then, "Of course, you realize this means war." I do believe in some kind of a logical, moral situation. Actually, Bugs was a counter-revolutionary, not a revolutionary at all. He didn't go out to bug people, people bugged him and then he fought back. And I think that counter-revolutionaries are a damned sight more intriguing than revolutionaries.

BARRIER: The style of your cartoons that you've been describing developed rather slowly in the late Thirties and early Forties. Did you make a conscious effort to develop a broader sort of humor than you had in your early cartoons, or did this just evolve naturally?

JONES: I'm not exactly sure. Certain cartoons are successful, and the results come back to you. I suppose that subconsciously you begin to apply those principles which seem to have been successful. The styles gradually evolve as you learn from one another. So I don't really know; I don't think that's really answerable. How does any artistic style evolve? I think that can better be determined by someone from the outside than by the person himself. I don't think that a Van Gogh, or a Gauguin, or a Thurber, or anyone else, could ever have identified his own style. Frankly, in my graphic works, in my drawings and paintings, people tell me I have an identifiable style, but I have no idea what it is. I think that my drawings vary tremendously, but people can identify the most diverse. After I began teaching, I began to think a good deal about style, and I believe that a person who has a style really is not aware of it. If he's aware of it, then he's imitating himself. The worst pictures at Disney's were made when they were trying to do them in the established Disney style, instead of how they felt at the time. I would say that you stop having a style when you prefer doing what's safe or what you're told to do. We quite frankly were out to make pictures that would make people laugh. My entire life has been involved with that particular idea. I never once in my life tried to make an art picture. I never tried desperately to make a picture that in itself was an advance of any kind. What I tried to do was make pictures that were funny within the certain limits of the field in which I was working. If you are making automobiles and you come up with a great idea for making a better bicycle, I don't think that you ought to stay in the automobile business. It's marvelous to make a bicycle, but I don't think you should make a bicycle and pretend you're making an automobile, and that's what's been happening out here. On the art side of the thing, the people who make these avant-garde films are not doing what is expected of them. The Saturday morning cartoons are not living up to the potential or needs of the audience.

There were two things that were essentially wrong with Saturday morning television when all that super junk was on. One of them was this super syndrome, a far worse thing for children than the violence. After all, what was Hitler? That's the super idea. This person who goes out on his never-ending fight against evil, is he some kind of god? Where does he get the right, outside the law, to protect other people? It implies that he knows what is right and wrong, and God knows, that's the worst thing a child could suppose, that right and wrong are implicit.

The other element is the eternal flatness and repetition, the same thing, the same actions, the same kind of stories. It's like the Chinese water torture. You can't torture a man by putting one drop of water on his forehead, you can't do it by putting ten, with a fairly normal person you can't do it with a thousand. But a million? No man can withstand it for a day, that continual drop-drop-drop. It's the sameness that kills you, and hurts children.

The thing is, it's not only that the studios are doing the same kind of work, it's the **same** people who are doing it. The same animator may show up at Filmation, then at Hanna-Barbera, then at DePatie-Freleng. The same man. They're going on a supposition that I believe to be completely erroneous: if you have a different drawing, you have a different character. This is ridiculous; it can't be true. Even in comic strips, it isn't true. A comic-strip artist eventually evolves certain physical characteristics for his characters, which indicate what a character is, not only by the way he's drawn but by what he does. In "Peanuts" there's the peculiar way Schulz draws that little curly mouth . . . his drawings look simple, but they're disarmingly simple. They're really very, very complicated, even his staging, within that little, simple area. He's kind of like Mondrian, who limited himself to parallel lines. Within that narrow area, he put a lifetime of experience. Schulz never shows a three-dimensional view of Snoopy's doghouse, for instance; you never see the front of it, you don't know what shape the door is. This was true starting with Mutt and Jeff. Mutt and Jeff always did certain things, they held up two fingers when they walked, they hit a particular pose. You can say, "A Mutt and Jeff pose," and every cartoonist knows what that is. The expressions and physical characteristics of characters like Maggie and Jiggs and the Katzenjammer Kids were what made them characters, and continue to do so. That's why many Saturday-morning cartoon characters don't translate well into comic strips, because they've never developed any physical characteristics. The Flintstones move exactly the same way Yogi Bear moves, and Yogi Bear moves exactly the same way something at Filmation moves, and so on. They have evolved a kind of shorthand, and that shorthand unfortunately can be read by anybody and can be learned by anybody in a short time.

SPICER: Isn't it the same thing with the Europeans? They have no real characters that I can see, and they all tend to look alike. They're not interested in personality.

JONES: No, usually they are not, and personality, after all, is just acting. Acting in animation is exactly the same as acting in live action, there's no difference at all. You know a Jack Benny by the way he folds his arms and looks around and says, "Well . . ." I don't have to look like Jack Benny in order to get that point across. I **am** Jack Benny by the very nature of my physical posture. The mimicry immediately identifies a comedian. In my opinion, a very simple rule about recognition of any character is that he can be imitated. But these characters on television, you can't imitate them. Why? Because they're all alike in action. You might be able to draw them, but you sure as hell can't imitate them. But you can imitate a Bugs Bunny, or Tom and Jerry, or Coyote, or Pepe' le Pew, or Goofy, or Mickey Mouse, or Donald Duck, any of these characters, because they were identified by their body movements.

BARRIER: Do you think cartoons as a medium are best suited to comedy? In recent years, they've moved away from stories and entertainment, to stating ideas . . . is that really suitable to the medium?

JONES: Sure, it's suitable. Anything is suitable for animation. I've done some science films, and some Bell Telephone sequences. I've worked in a lot of other areas of animation besides humor. Freleng and I won an Academy Award for a documentary; Friz and I wrote it and I directed it. I did many training films during the war. I've had a good bit of experience in non-humorous areas. Unfortunately, the humor tended to leak

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"The important thing about 'One Hundred and One Dalmatians' from an animator's standpoint, and this is generally unrecognized, was the development of living characters who were not Rotoscoped. Roger was an impressive character, but he wasn't drawn like a real man, because his elbows were in the wrong place and his hands and his nose were too big and he was out of proportion. He looked more human than humans do."

into what was intended to be serious.

But it comes back to the same business, the erroneous supposition that you must destroy something in order to create something. It started with UPA; up to that time, everybody was willing to let everybody else live. You might think you made better pictures than anybody else—I never did, but other people did—but you sure as hell didn't deny the person the right to do their thing. When UPA started making pictures, their P.R. men surprisingly said, "This contradicts everything that has gone before. This does away with fuzzy little animals," as if Disney had only done fuzzy little animals. He never did fuzzy little animals, because there's no way you can make animals fuzzy in animation. His animals are cute, sure—some of them are sticky. But that isn't what made Disney what he was.

SPICER: Walter Lantz has stated the theory that it's possible to have "movie stars" in animation of the realistically drawn type, accepted just like real movie stars. Do you believe that?

JONES: No, I believe animation is an extension of motion pictures, not an imitation. It should go where live action can't go. If I could train a real coyote to do what my Coyote used to do, I'd just as soon use a live coyote. But I have to go in areas where live action can't go. You have to make compromises in some cases. For instance, in "The Phantom Tollbooth," we had to have a boy who looks like a boy, so we animated a boy in a kind of live-action style . . . but that's because the predominant characters could not be live.

I think realistic animation can be done, but I think it should be done the way they did it in "One Hundred and One Dalmatians." The important thing about "One Hundred and One Dalmatians" from an animator's standpoint, and this is generally unrecognized, was the development of living characters who were not Rotoscoped. Roger was an impressive character, but he wasn't drawn like a real man, because his elbows were in the wrong place and his hands and his nose were too big and he was out of proportion. He looked more human than humans do. That's why the term "realistic" wouldn't apply to Roger, but "human" would. He was like a Peter Arno drawing of a man or a girl. He was stylized. If you'd take a Roger Price drawing or a Ralph Barton drawing or a Peter Arno drawing and animate them, I think they'd be bigger than life. Did you ever look carefully at a miniature of Michelangelo's "David"? It's an enormous statue. Big as it is, in miniature the head seems still far too big for the body; it seems all out of proportion. But when you see the real statue, it's on a pedestal, which is just about at eye level, and then you look up at the statue. From that perspective, the head diminishes to the proper proportion. Otherwise, the statue would look like a pinhead. Michelangelo was one of the most profound artists of all time, and he knew what he was doing, just as El Greco did. El Greco probably painted elongated people because his paintings were to be hung high on church walls. One of his most intricate paintings was for a niche where you could look at it only on the diagonal, on a bias, and he painted it so that at that angle of view, it seems to be in proper proportion.

I think there's absolutely no limit to what the animated cartoon should and can do. Again, because you can do one thing, that doesn't mean that you're not supposed to do another. I think that anything that anyone can conceive of for the animation medium is proper and possible. It's just as broad as that. But in any line of endeavor, when you start throwing in negatives—I'm doing this, therefore something else is wrong—you're wasting your time, you're sweating over something you shouldn't even bother with. What do you care what the other man is doing? I am interested but I don't care. I'm perfectly willing for these people to do this Saturday-morning thing. However, I wouldn't want any children of mine to spend much time looking at it. As an animator, I don't think any animator should ever condemn another animator's way of making a living. But I can criticize it as an art form, and I can criticize what it does to my medium, without criticizing the man. I don't say he's wrong and I'm right; I'm saying that if I weren't an animator, in my opinion he'd still be wrong.

SPICER: What do you think is the most neglected aspect of animation today?

JONES: The most neglected aspect, and the saddest thing now, is that there are only two studios, this one and Disney's, that are utilizing the talents of full ani-

mators, journeyman animators, in the proudest sense of the term. There are some people, like Bill Littlejohn, who are doing some marvelous stuff in commercials, but unfortunately, the best commercial you ever do, you don't get credit for it. The best commercial that's ever done is dead within a year of the time it's done. So it can't really become a part of the library, or the folklore, of great animation performances. It gets lost, and that's a pity.

The most dynamically tragic thing that can be said about animation today is that if you want to hire a journeyman animator today, you'll hire the same animator that you hired thirty years ago—not the same kind of animator, **the same animator.** The fine journeyman animators today, ninety-five per cent of them are over forty, and ninety per cent of them are over fifty. Ben Washam, next door, is fifty-two years old. Abe Levitow, my director, who was considered an **enfant terrible** at one time, is forty-seven or forty-eight years old. The guys at Disney's are all close to sixty. When those people go, there's not going to be anybody to replace them.

SPICER: What about the young guys who are coming along?

JONES: There are not many who are animators; they're practically everything else. Let me put it this way. If there's an acting craft, in films or on stage, there are people evolving who supply actors with the sort of material they must have in order to perform. The Albees and so on grew out of a renaissance of acting. It sort of became popular to have fine acting once again. There was a time when we were all concerned that the great actors were going to die off the way the animators are dying off. There was a corollary situation in the 1930s when everyone got preoccupied with stagecraft, and the actor was pushed into the background. It reached a kind of dramatic head when Norman Bel Geddes, I think it was, built a stage set so enormous that the people in the balcony couldn't see the players because they had run the stage out over the first thirty rows or so in this theater. There was a sudden revulsion against this sort of thing, with Orson Welles and the Mercury Theater, and they stripped the stages bare, and ran actors out in their street clothes to play Shakespeare. Acting came back into focus; that is, to evolve a mood simply by what the actor does and says. Well, obviously, he can't do that unless he has a vehicle to perform. So, getting laboriously back to the point whether there are young animators now, one reason there aren't young animators now is that all the animators are animating on this very thin Saturday-morning stuff. Very few of them know their own craft, just as I think that many television writers don't know their own craft. Anybody who has to turn out a half-hour script every week to survive—or to survive the way he likes to survive—can't write a play of any quality in that time. Maybe you can write just one. That's what usually happens, these men will write a very good pilot, and on the basis of that pilot a series is sold, and then what happens? You have to bring in at least ten writers to finish the series, and you immediately lose control, and immediately you get off into shoddy, unimaginative performances. So, the sadness is not that my animators or the animators at Disney's are not doing what they're capable of doing—they are. The sadness is that many of the old-time animators are working only on these Saturday morning shows. It's like a violinist playing a triangle and getting paid three times what he used to make. It's a pity. I'm talking now not as an animation director, but as a person; I feel a personal loss in this.

When Hanna and Barbera were doing Tom and Jerrys, they were supposed to do ten cartoons a year, ten six- or seven-minute cartoons. They never did quite that, but let's say they did an hour in toto in a year. The two of them and a crew of seven or eight men did ten six-minute cartoons; that's what we did at Warner's. Right now, as I understand it, they have three hours of television that they have to produce every week. I don't even know how to multiply that in terms of percentages, but let's say they work forty weeks—that is one hundred and twenty hours a year, as compared to one hour before.

SPICER: But you can meet this rigorous schedule and still turn out something worthwhile, as Jay Ward did with "Crusader Rabbit" and "Bullwinkle."

JONES: Those at least had witty dialogue. But you're not talking about animation, you're talking about illustrated radio. I agree that Jay proved that dialogue could be better, but you're talking about cartoons being better in terms of the way they sound. They also could be better visually with the same amount of money.

BARRIER: You've been doing longer cartoons than you used to do; has this created new problems for you, of pacing and the like?

JONES: Yes, you do pace them a little more mildly. There's a tendency not to crowd as much material in. But even so, some people thought "The Grinch" was a little over-produced, although it was extremely successful. I think that was because, basically, television programs spread their material so thin. A half-hour show usually contains material enough for maybe ten minutes. It's like spreading your butter too thin, you get to the point where you almost can't taste it. I still feel that every frame has meaning. That doesn't mean you can't hold a frame for twelve exposures or more, but you must do it thoughtfully.

On "The Phantom Tollbooth," fortunately, the nature of the story helped us a great deal in keeping the pace. It also saved us an enormous amount of concern in terms of the characters walking. Masterful artists, like the Disney animators in "Winnie the Pooh," still have an enormous amount of trouble with walking human characters. It would seem that that would be something an animator would learn how to draw rapidly, but body mechanics are so intricate that the foreshortening of hands and arms and so on, and the techniques of getting some weight into the ground, are very difficult. It's practically impossible to do consistently well. Fortunately for us, during the entire story of "The Phantom Tollbooth," the main characters ride in a small electric car. I didn't realize until we got into it how fortunate we were. Milo doesn't have to walk very much, and when he does he's usually running or falling or stumbling. But, as I say, because of the nature of the story itself, moving from place to place in an automobile, the stuff sort of naturally

"Fortunately for us, during the entire story of 'The Phantom Tollbooth,' the main characters ride in a small electric car. I didn't realize until we got into it how fortunate we were. Milo doesn't have to walk very much, and when he does he's usually running or falling or stumbling."

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A Gallery Of Jones' Cartoons For MGM

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"How the Grinch Stole Christmas"

paces itself between sequences, growing and evolving, one into the other. The pacing isn't the same throughout; when we go into the broad comedy sequences, it becomes paced very much like an old cartoon.

Of course, I paced things like Pepé le Pew a great deal differently than I paced the Road Runner cartoons, not only because the material was different, but because the characters were different. Pepé, for instance, would never walk at an eight-beat (three steps to the second), he would walk at a twelve-beat (two to the second). He'd walk much more casually, and he'd stop and look at something and contemplate it, instead of going right to it. And, of course, he bounced along, to one of Carl Stalling's little themes, a sort of "Sorcerer's Apprentice" theme. He never increased that tempo at all, no matter what the cat was doing. Pepé would always be slower than the cat at the beginning and faster at the end; it was a tortoise-and-the-hare type of thing.

BARRIER: Another of my favorite walks is the Minah Bird's, in the Inki cartoons, to the "Fingal's Cave" overture.

JONES: Those cartoons really baffled Walt Disney. They baffled me, for that matter; I just made them because I thought they were funny. I wasn't even sure I thought they were funny; they were kind of mysterious. The little Negro was probably the first one who was just a little kid; he was a Negro only because he was living in Africa, not for any other reason. He never acted like a stereotyped Negro.

But people would laugh at that damned bird, and I could never figure out why. Warner's hated it, but it went over very big in the theaters. Walt would run them for his staff, and say, "What the hell . . . why can't you guys do something like that? What is it? What's so goddamn funny about it?" If he'd brought me over, I couldn't have told him. I made five or six of them[4]. . . they were really fourth-dimensional pictures, and I don't understand the fourth dimension.

BARRIER: A great many of your cartoons, including the Inki cartoons, are in pantomime, and there seems to be less use of voices in your cartoons than in Freleng's or McKimson's. Did this give you a special kind of freedom? Was there any special reason you decided to do so many cartoons this way?

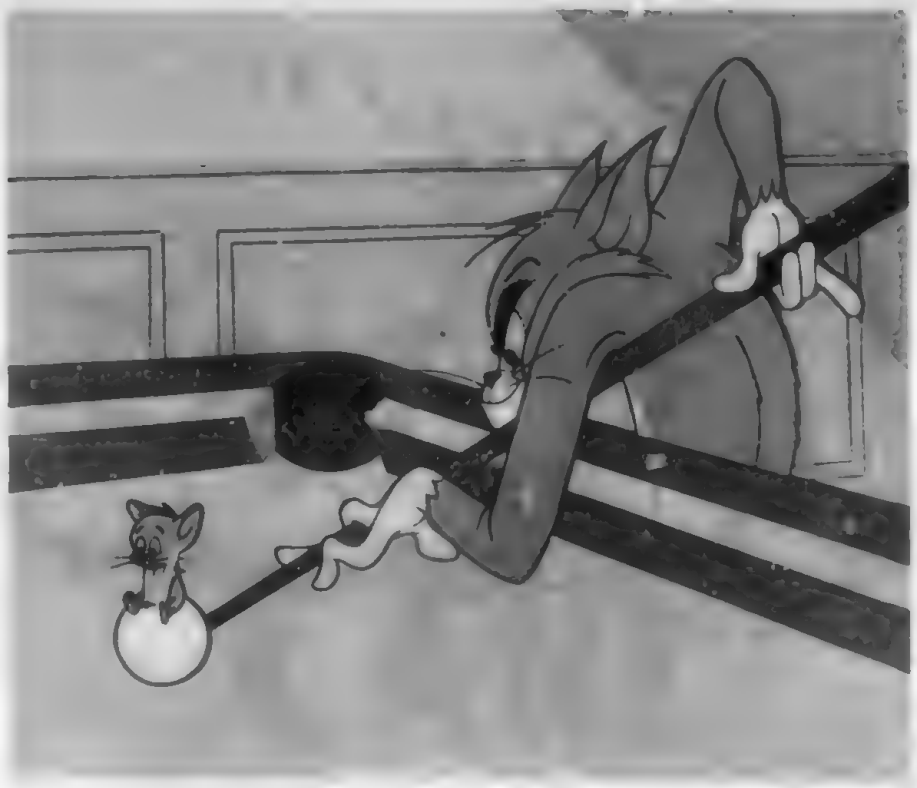
JONES: I think that I realized I was working in a graphic field, with drawing the basic tool. To me, drawing is animation, in a new sense, a consecutive sense. The individual drawing is not very important, it's the flurry of drawings that counts. It requires a whole new drawing style. That's why the best directors, the ones that have been most successful, have come out of animation, and the best layout men, and there are very few of them. I would say Hawley Pratt is one of the very best layout men, he was not an animator, but he's always worked with Friz, who was a good one. Because he was never an animator, some animators fight Hawley's fine drawings a lot more than they fight mine. Friz roughs his layouts and then Hawley works them over. Friz, as a former animator, tends to body positions that will work in animation. Joe Barbera was a fine animator, and he's a fine layout man and director, too. But for me, it is a little more than that, it is also the feeling that I am just lucky enough to be working in something that gives me the kind of expression that is not available to everybody else. I like to throw in a lot of drawings myself. I guess it is just like a person who paints because he enjoys painting, I feel that the best way to express myself in animation is to accomplish as much as I can without dialogue. Otherwise, I may tend to lean on dialogue.

BARRIER: Do you feel a special kinship with the silent comedians, who worked in pantomime?

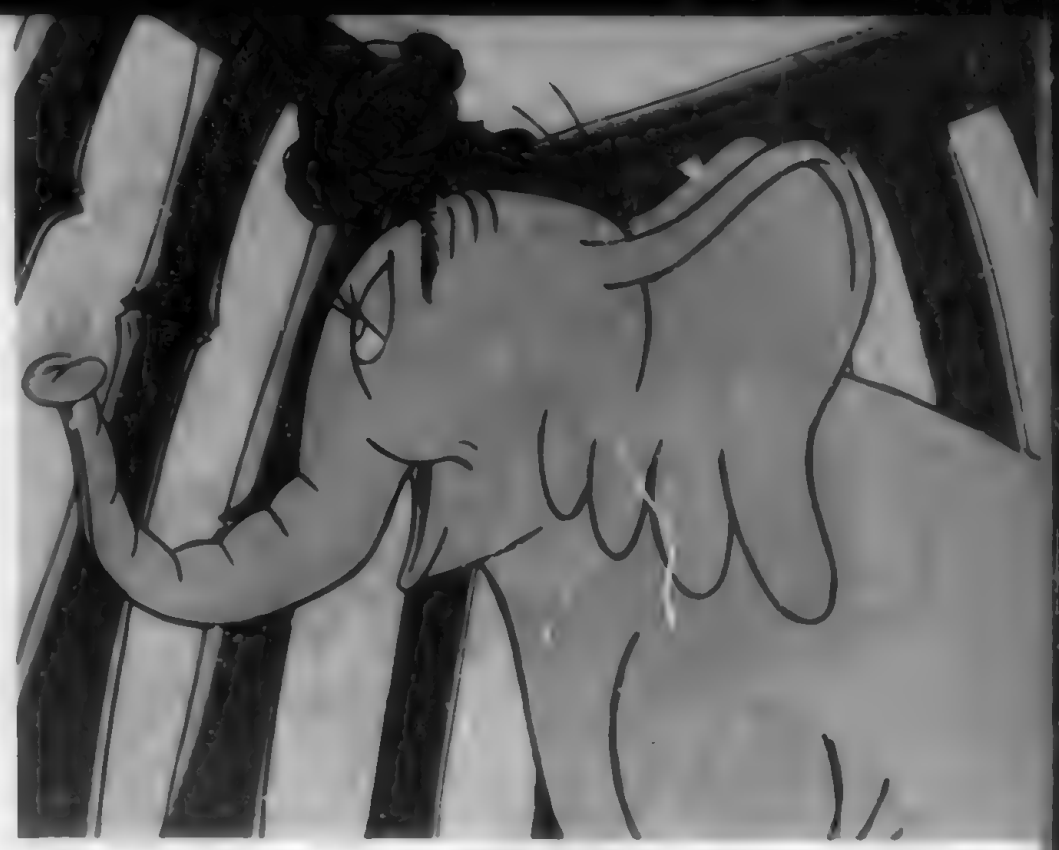
JONES: I owe an enormous debt to all of the great ones, and even to some who are not great. As a matter of fact, I've seen some old Buster Keaton films recently that I hadn't seen before, and I've seen things which were—I think I've used this term before—retroactive plagiarism. I stole from them without really knowing it. I obviously had seen the films when I was a kid, and used things I'd seen—guys running away into the distance, then explosions in the distance; funny little hops. Some of them have been conscious; I used those hopping corner turns, those jumps up into the air, which the Keystone Kops used, and which to me are funny and well worth utilizing.

I was raised around those men. I lived in Ocean Park during the time when most of the Mack Sennett stuff was being shot, when I was a little boy, and I played in some of those pictures

(4) There were five: "The Little Lion Hunter" (1939), Inki and the Lion" (1941), "Inki and the Minah Bird" (1943), "Inki at the Circus" (1946) and "Caveman Inki" (1949).



Jones' version of Tom and Jerry.



"Horton Hears a Who"

almost inadvertantly, because that's how they got crowd scenes, taking whoever was around. They didn't pay you, they'd just say, "You wanta be in the picture, kid? Don't look at the camera." So you'd walk into the mob and be part of it.

I know that those comedians did not think of themselves as profound. That's another thing that hits me about your lady friend, is that she probably adores these early comedians, and goes on the supposition that these filmmakers and actors were philosophers. They weren't, they were artists. The difference is so profound that you can hardly talk about them the same way. A philosopher postulates, and hopes that somebody will act according to his postulation, but the artist performs, and then somebody comes along and postulates **about** that. To me, the artist who postulates stops being an artist while he's postulating. He'd do better spending his time drawing. I get very tired of people who can draw and don't, who prefer to talk about it. Many of them are brilliant—they understand everything that's happening in the business. The only trouble is, they're not doing it.

BARRIER: You don't use dialogue much, but you seem to place a lot of importance on music, especially in cartoons like "Rabbit of Seville" (1951) and "What's Opera, Doc?" (1957), in which you use classical music.

JONES: "What's Opera, Doc?" is one many Europeans adore. They call that my "masterpiece," which it may or may not be; I didn't think about it at the time. It was very difficult to do; one hundred and four cuts in six minutes. But there again, every frame counted.

BARRIER: Since you've built cartoons around music, is there any particular approach you've employed in doing this?

JONES: No, I don't think so. I usually would go over the thing more or less for pace, with the musicians, before the picture started. In the Road Runner cartoons, I developed almost a concerto style; I don't know why, I'm not that much of a musician. It had a definite form to it, but I couldn't tell you exactly what that form was, except that it tended to have variables and it tended to grow . . . now I'm doing very much what I said the other people were doing, talking too much about it. I feel that no element of a cartoon—or a stage play or motion picture, for that matter—should stand out as an individual element. If anybody says, "That's great cutting," it's bad cutting. You should never be aware of cutting; you should be aware of the effect of it. If someone's in a stairwell looking up, it's perfectly natural for the camera to look up, too. It's even natural for the camera to have an opinion, in the sense of emphasizing a story point. If you're waiting for a telephone to ring, and it rings, you immediately cut to the telephone.

SPICER: You satirized the angle shots, the "High Noon" sort of cutting, in a western with Porky and Daffy ["Drip-along Daffy "(1951)].

JONES: That was on purpose, absolutely. I had a lot of fun with that. I wanted the audience to think I was kidding the Western, and I wanted every shot that could possibly be put in there. Actually, I would think it would be very tricky to shoot a great Western. The trick would be, you'd have to put the stock stuff in, but you mustn't do it in a way that will offend anybody by using exactly the same shots that they're so familiar with. That's why "Stagecoach" was so great. One of the things that made "Stagecoach" so interesting, and kept you from worrying about so many of the shots, was that John Wayne carried a rifle, he didn't carry a six-gun. You don't know what the hell is going to happen, because it's so contrary to everything you've seen before. In "High Noon," an emotional situation had been set up, so that the angle shots and other things didn't bother you. Cooper's reactions were natural; it's the way I would have felt. And yet all the townspeople's reasons for not helping him were also natural. It was a hell of a fine picture.

BARRIER: Color seems to be less important in the Warner cartoons than in the early Disneys and the MGMs . . . did you pay much attention to color, or was this secondary to you?

JONES: Well, "What's Opera, Doc?" was really a tour de force in color . . . a "tour de farce," if you prefer.

BARRIER: Yes, color's important there, but it seems less important in a lot of earlier cartoons.

JONES: Some of that is a little disarming. We used it quite extensively but in a very, very narrow palette on the Road Runners. Because there we were working with space, and you couldn't have clutter. In my opinion, the old Hanna-Barbera cartoons were cluttered in background treatment, and kind of old hat, even then. It seemed to work all right with their pictures, but it sure as hell didn't add anything. I think every one of our pictures—my pictures, especially, because I had Maurice Noble—was experimental. But I wouldn't say there was anything distinctive about the backgrounds of my early pictures. We had a background department at that time, rather than a background man working with each unit. They painted everybody's backgrounds and so all the pictures' backgrounds tended to look alike. They were all pretty bad; their basic color was something we used to call "diaper-brindle."

But Maurice always experimented. In an outer space thing ["Hareway to the Stars" (1958)] we just built a kind of little transparent city, suspended in space, rather than a planet. That was Maurice's idea, to use those hunks of what looked like transparent plastic. We always tried something new, but it always had to work relative to the business. I didn't want the audience to be conscious that we were doing any fancy experimenting.

"Minnie's Yoo Hoo!"

MICKEY MOUSE

THEME SONG

AS SUNG BY—
WALT DISNEY'S
WORLD FAMOUS
CARTOON CHARACTER
MICKEY MOUSE

Villa Moret Inc.
MUSIC PUBLISHERS
KRESS BUILDING
SAN FRANCISCO
THE VOICE OF THE WEST

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The sheet music for the Mickey Mouse theme song, words and music by Carl Stalling.

AN INTERVIEW WITH

CARL STALLING

A 1948 sketch by Bob Givens.

It's instructive to listen to the soundtrack of a Warner Brothers cartoon—especially one in pantomime—without watching the pictures. The music and the sound effects are mirrors of the action, so completely integrated into the whole that, for many of us, Carl Stalling's music and Treg Brown's sound effects are the common thread that holds the Warner cartoons together. Stalling's music is always as vigorous, funny and inventive as the animation. He composed the scores for more than six hundred Warner cartoons.

Milton Gray and I recorded an interview with Carl Stalling on June 4, 1969, at his home in the Hollywood Hills. Milt and Bill Spicer recorded a second interview on November 25, 1969, and those interviews have been supplemented with many letters since then. All of this material has been pulled together in the interview that follows.

—MIKE BARRIER

GRAY: How did you become a composer of music for cartoons?

STALLING: As I recall, I first met Walt Disney in the early Twenties. He used to come to the Isis Theater, where I played the organ and had my own orchestra. This was music to accompany silent movies, and I played the whole afternoon and evening. When I wasn't at the organ, I'd be conducting, or playing the piano and conducting. I had a pianist for a number of years, and then I just conducted. Walt was making short commercials at that time, and he'd have us run them for him. We got acquainted, and I had him make several song films. "The End of a Perfect Day," showing a sunset . . . Victor Herbert's "A Kiss in the Dark." The words would come on one at a time, with the music. This was before sound, of course.

Walt left for Hollywood shortly after that time, and I didn't see him again until 1928. I started writing him when sound pictures came in, and in our correspondence back and forth, we just agreed that there would be a position for a musical director at his studio. He came through Kansas City on his way to New York to record the music for "Steamboat Willie" (1928). I didn't go with him, since he already had that all set up. I had nothing to do with that.[1]

Walt took a taxi to my home, and we talked principally of how sound pictures were causing a revolution in Hollywood. He had two silent pictures—"Gallopin' Gaucho" and "Plane Crazy"—already made, and he left those with me. I wrote most of the music for them at home in Kansas City. I met Walt in New York to record that music and we shared the same hotel room; we both washed out our socks in the same bathroom sink. I was with Walt when "Steamboat Willie" was previewed at the Colony Theater, down on Broadway, and we got the

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(1) Wilfred Jackson has described the preparation of the "Steamboat Willie" music track this way: "I played the harmonica so that Walt could tell the tempo that he wanted for 'Steamboat Bill' and 'Turkey in the Straw' [two public-domain tunes used in the score for the picture] . I would set the metronome and play 'Steamboat Bill' or 'Turkey' or whatever, and when Walt heard what sounded good for the tune and his action both, then he knew that was the beat he wanted. Walt knew how fast film went, and I knew about the metronome. Putting the two together made it possible to pre-time music to animation when the music would be recorded later, just by simple mathematics.

"Walt made up the exposure sheet for 'Willie.' What I worked out was a bar sheet or dope sheet, to indicate measures of music. It wasn't like a score, because it didn't have five bar lines. It had a little square for each beat in each measure, and it had an indication of the tempo; it was in twelve frames, or sixteen frames, or whatever, to the beat. Within that square, the key action and the scene number was indicated, so that the bar sheet showed that each scene began so many frames before a certain measure. That way, we were able to synchronize the scenes, which were shot separately, of course. Each individual scene would be shot from the exposure sheet, but from the bar sheet, you could tell where to lay the scene in against the music track, once you found out where the first beat of the music was. My contributions to sound cartoons were that I knew what a metronome was, and I worked out what was first called a dope sheet and later a bar sheet."

Walt later told Jackson that when he stopped at Kansas City and showed Jackson's "score" to Carl Stalling, Stalling's comment was, "This man's no musician." Jackson says that Walt enjoyed kidding him about that thereafter, and adds, "Carl was right."

audience reaction. The reaction was very good. We sat on almost the last row and heard laughs and snickers all around us. (2)

BARRIER: I've read that while you were still in Kansas City, Walt wrote you from Hollywood to ask for a loan of two hundred and fifty dollars. Is that correct?

STALLING: Yes, and after joining him in Hollywood, I loaned him two thousand dollars. He repaid me in full long before 1933, but I don't remember the date.

SPICER: Had you done any composing before your first cartoon work for Walt?

STALLING: No; I improvised at the theaters, and that's composing, but it's not writing it down.

SPICER: Could you tell us about the music you did for "The Skeleton Dance" (1929), the first of the Silly Symphonies?

STALLING: It was mostly original; that was forty years ago, and I can't remember if I used anything else or not. But it wasn't Saint-Saens' "Danse Macabre," although some writers have said it was.

GRAY: I've read that Walt wanted to use that music, but couldn't get copyright clearance, so he asked you to compose something similar.

STALLING: That's what he usually did when something was copyrighted, but my music wasn't similar at all to the "Danse Macabre." It was mostly a fox trot, in a minor key.

BARRIER: I've been told that you used some of the music from Grieg's "Peer Gynt Suite" in "The Skeleton Dance." Do you remember using that music?

STALLING: No. When we were working out a story, usually for the Silly Symphonies, I would sometimes use a musical number as a pattern, suggesting a certain style or mood. I would play it on the piano for the director, and then write something similar, but original, for recording.(3)

Walt never wanted to pay for music; he wanted me to just make up something. In one picture, he wanted to use the song "School Days," but he would have had to pay for it. So he said, "Carl, can't you write something that sounds like 'School Days' but isn't?"

"The Skeleton Dance" goes way back to my kid days. When I was eight or ten years old, I saw an ad in THE AMERICAN BOY magazine of a dancing skeleton, and I got my dad to give me a quarter so I could sent for it. It turned out to be a pasteboard cut-out of a loose-jointed skeleton, slung over a six-foot cord under the arm pits. It would "dance" when kids pulled and jerked at each end of the string.

GRAY: So the idea for "The Skeleton Dance" was really yours. And the story, too?

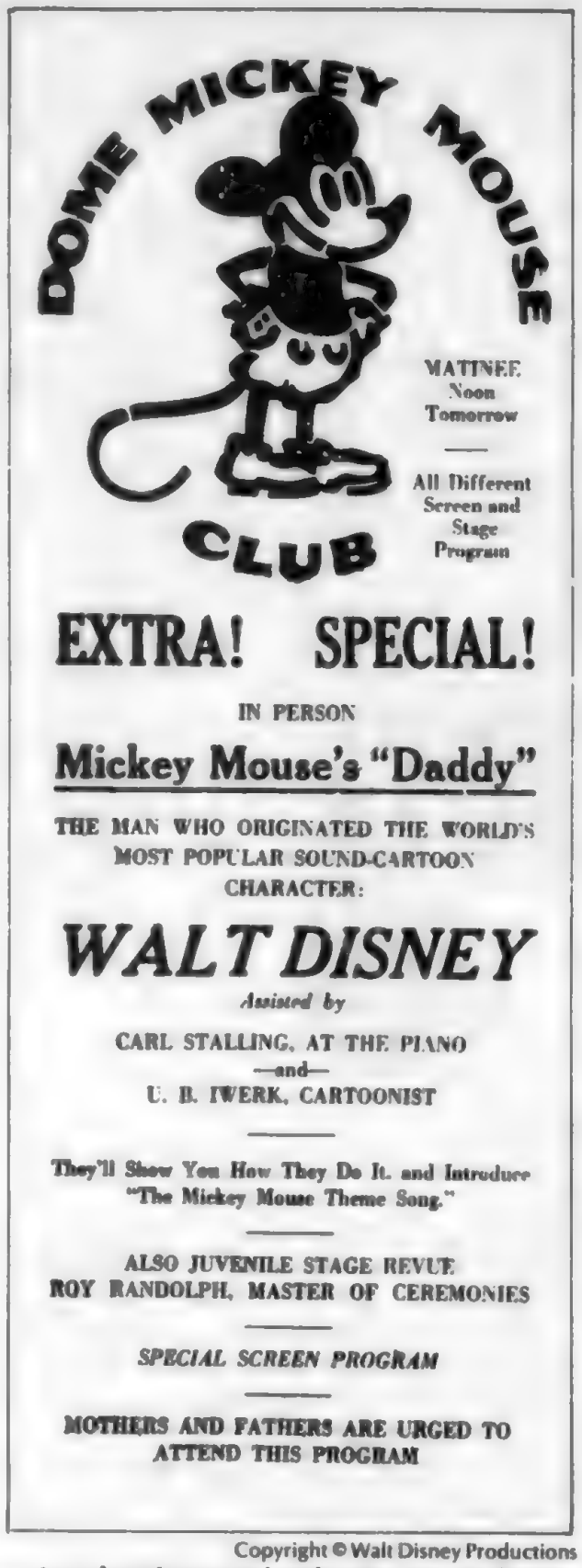
STALLING: If you call it a story. We'd all get together on gags, in what they called a gag meeting.

GRAY: What did Walt say when you brought up the idea for "The Skeleton Dance"? Did he like it right away?

STALLING: He was interested right away. After two or three of the Mickeys had been completed and were being run in theaters, Walt talked with me on getting started on the musical series that I had in mind. He thought I meant illustrated songs, but I didn't have that in mind at all. When I told him that I was thinking of inanimate figures, like skeletons, trees, flowers, etc., coming to life and dancing and doing other animated actions fitted to music more or less in a humorous and rhythmic mood, he became very much interested. I gave him the idea of using the four seasons, and he made a cartoon on each one of those. I scored one of them ["Springtime," (1930)] before I left.

For a name or title for the series, I suggested **not** using the word "music" or "musical," as it sounded too commonplace, but to use the word "Symphony" together with a humorous word. At the next gag meeting, I don't know who suggested it, but Walt asked me: "Carl, how would 'Silly Symphony' sound to you?" I said, "Perfect!" Then I suggested the first subject, "The Skeleton Dance," because ever since I was a kid I had wanted to see real skeletons dancing and had always enjoyed seeing skeleton-dancing acts in vaudeville. As kids, we all like spooky pictures and stories, I think.

That's how the Silly Symphonies got started. Of course, everyone knows that if it had not been for Walt Disney then in all probability there would never have been a Mickey Mouse. This makes me wonder sometimes, would there ever have been a Silly Symphony or who would have suggested "The Skeleton Dance"—if? (4)



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An advertisement for the Fox Dome theater in Ocean Park, California, from the Bay Cities Amusement News for September 13, 1929.

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(2) According to David Smith of the Disney Archives, a telegram from Walt Disney to his brother Roy, dated October 24, 1928, says: "Carl arrives Friday." That would have been October 26, 1928. "Steamboat Willie" premiered on November 18, 1928 (the September date usually given is wrong).

Walt and Carl returned from New York in December 1928, and Walt mentioned in a letter that he had been there three months and had synchronized four cartoons ("Willie," "Gaucho," "Plane" and "The Barn Dance"). Carl Stalling recalls that they made at least one other trip to New York, in 1929, to record the music for "The Op'ry House."

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(3) According to David Smith of the Disney Archives, the studio obtained a license to use "The March of the Dwarfs" from Grieg's "Lyric Suite" in "The Skeleton Dance." The rest of the score was original music by Carl Stalling.

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(4) Wilfred Jackson adds his recollection of the start of the Silly Symphonies: "Walt and Carl would time the pictures in Walt's office. Timing them consisted of working out what the music would be and what the action would be." (The director—Walt, in this case—would prepare the exposure sheets after agreement had been reached on the timing. Later, the Disney directors had assistants who would transfer the timing onto the sheets.) "A lot of times Walt would want more time or less time for the action than could fit the musical phrase. So, there would be a pretty good argument going on in there. We'd sit out there, in the next room, and enjoy it. Walt could be pretty stiff when he got in an argument, and we'd be glad we weren't on the other end of it. But, finally, Walt worked out a thing with Carl. He said, 'Look, let's work it out this way. We'll make two series. On the Mickey Mouse pictures you make your music fit my action the very best you can. But we'll make another series, and they'll be musical shorts. And in them music will take precedence and we'll adjust our action the best we can to what you think is the right music.' Those were the Sillys, and that was a way of getting something done and not getting in a dog fight all of the time.

"Both of those people could be pretty obstinate when they felt like it. Carl could stand up to Walt and give him what for and when it came to the music, if you pushed him a little too far he could put up a pretty good argument."

SPICER: What are your recollections of the "Skeleton Dance" preview?
STALLING: It was a late show at the Vista Theater down on Hillhurst and Sunset in Hollywood; a small theater. Walt was disappointed in it. There were very few people there, no house. We saw "Steamboat Willie" in New York at eight or nine o'clock, with a full house. But here in Hollywood, at eleven o'clock, there were only a few stragglers. There wasn't any reaction, and Walt didn't think it went over at all. He said, "What the hell's the matter with the damned thing?" But they did ship it that night, I think, by Air Express to New York. The next we heard it was running at the Roxy, for two weeks. They liked it so well they ran it for another two weeks, a return engagement. (5)
GRAY: How was Walt as a boss? Was he demanding, or easy to work for?
STALLING: Well, he couldn't explain just what he wanted, at times. We'd go crazy trying to figure out what he wanted. But he inspired us that way. We wanted to help him, we wanted to do it, and we all worked together in that respect. That was his genius, I think, inspiring the people who worked for him to come up with new ideas.
BARRIER: Did Walt tell you what he wanted in the way of music?
STALLING: He had definite ideas sometimes, and sometimes it'd be the other way around.
GRAY: Did you work in the same room with the animators at Disney's?
STALLING: Yes; everybody worked in one big room.
BARRIER: Was that room the one called "the music room"?
STALLING: I only remember one big room, outside of the two business offices. (6)

The complete animation staff of the Walt Disney studio in 1929 sings the new Mickey Mouse theme song ("Minnie's Yoo Hoo") that was used to introduce the Mickey cartoons. Standing, left to right: Johnny Cannon, Walt Disney, Burt Gillette, Ub Iwerks, Wilfred Jackson, Les Clark. Seated: Carl Stalling, Jack King, Ben Sharpsteen.

BARRIER: You invented the "tick" system of recording music for animated cartoons, didn't you? Do you recall the circumstances that led to that?
STALLING: The "tick" system was not really an invention, since it was not patentable. Perfect synchronization of music for cartoons was a problem, since there were so many quick changes and actions that the music had to match. The thought struck me that if each member of the orchestra had a steady beat in his ear, from a telephone receiver, this would solve the problem. I had exposure sheets for the films, with the picture broken down frame by frame, sort of like a script, and twelve of the film frames went through the projector in a half second. That gave us a beat.
GRAY: . . . If you chose a twelve-frame beat. You had other beats, too.
STALLING: Six, eight, ten, etc., depending on the kind of music used. We made recordings of "tick" sounds at different beats—a tick every eight frames, or ten frames, or twelve frames—and played this on a phonograph connected to the recording machine and to earphones. Each member of the orchestra had a single earphone, and listened to the clicks through that. It wasn't necessary for the conductor to give a beat, but I did, because one or two of the musicians didn't like to use the earphones. We had a woman 'cello player at Warner's, and she didn't like to use the earphones because they hurt her head or something. She was a fine 'cellist, so we couldn't criticize her too much, and she didn't get off the beat much.
GRAY: Did you record before the animation was completed, or after?
STALLING: Both, but usually before. The animators and I all worked from that same exposure sheet, and I just recorded from our beat, without seeing the picture. By the time they had the picture ready, I had the recorded music ready. (7)
BARRIER: Did you pre-score much of your music at the Disney studio—did the animators fit their actions to your music, instead of the other way around? I was reading a Disney book by Bob Thomas called THE ART OF ANIMATION again recently, and I came across this paragraph about how the early Disney cartoons were made:

> "The musician put the songs and tuneful bits together and handed the score to the animator [Thomas means the director] . The animator timed the music on his yellow exposure sheet and then fashioned the action to fit the music."

That seems to contradict your statement that you composed your music **after** the exposure sheets were prepared, and not before. Is that what happened, or is THE

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(5) Differing accounts of "Skeleton Dance" previews have been published in two books. Diane Disney Miller, in THE STORY OF WALT DISNEY, describes two different previews—one in the morning, before a small audience, and another at a large, important theater, with favorable reactions both times. Bob Thomas, in THE ART OF ANIMATION, says, "At the preview, the theater was rocked with laughter." Mrs. Miller describes in considerable detail the tribulations of the cartoon before its successful run at the Roxy, saying that exhibitors refused to accept it at first.

(6) Wilfred Jackson recalls that when Stalling and Walt Disney timed the pictures, they moved the piano into Walt's office, and that became the first "music room"—the room shared by the animation director and the music director. Later, when production had become more specialized, and there was a story department, the story men would work on their stories to a certain point and then move the story boards into "the music room" (there eventually were several), where the director and the composer would work on them. Jackson says that the "one big room" that Stalling remembers was divided by partitions that were open at the top.

(7) Wilfred Jackson recalls that recording the soundtrack for an early Disney cartoon was usually delayed until the cartoon was complete or production had reached the point where it was reasonably certain that no more changes would be made in it. (Even after the exposure sheets had been prepared, an animator could suggest spreading out or compressing a gag, or making other changes.) This practice continued even after the introduction of the "tick" system. Jackson believes that Stalling is "covering a broad spectrum" and referring to his career at the Warner studio as well as at Disney's.

ART OF ANIMATION correct?

STALLING: Both statements are correct. Sometimes the director made the action fit a certain piece of music, and other times I wrote music to fit certain actions. Most of the time, the directors and animators were free to do what they thought best to make the action most effective.

BARRIER: Do you mean that not even "The Skeleton Dance" and the other Silly Symphonies were pre-scored?

STALLING: No. I pre-scored the music only when it wasn't possible to animate without pre-scoring.

At Iwerks' and Warner's, I worked almost entirely from exposure sheets.[8]

BARRIER: If you wrote most of your music at the Disney studio after the exposure sheets were prepared, did you confer with Walt about the beats **before** the sheets were prepared?

STALLING: Yes, usually, to prevent monotony. A change of beat would mean a change of tempo or rhythm, or both.[9]

GRAY: When was your "tick" system first used?

STALLING: It must have been in 1929, at Disney's, on "The Skeleton Dance."

BARRIER: How did you record the music for cartoons before you started using the "tick" system?

STALLING: I had lines drawn on the prints of the cartoons that I used for recording. The lines would show on the screen so that the whole orchestra could see them, and that's how I got my beat when I was conducting.

When I was composing the music for "Gallopin' Gaucho" and "Plane Crazy," the two silent pictures, I had the cartoons shown at the theater where I worked, so that I could decide what music would be appropriate. I was having trouble figuring out how to get the music synchronized with the picture, then I hit on the idea of drawing 'half-moon' lines on the film that started on the left side of one frame, then moved to the right across the following frames, and then back toward the left, with the beat occurring when the line returned to the left side of the screen. That way, the beat didn't catch the musicians by surprise when we were recording. We also used these lines when we recorded the music for "The Barn Dance" in New York.

BARRIER: I've read that Walt drew marks on the print of "Steamboat Willie" that they used for recording in New York, so that the conductor could watch the marks as they flashed on the screen and stay on the beat.

STALLING: I don't think he did that, because the pictures and the music seemed out of sync at times.[10]

BARRIER: Wilfred Jackson has said that there was another line system that Ub Iwerks worked out, based on your system. He said that Ub animated a horizontal line rising and falling, and that the line was photographed at different speeds so that the complete cycle of rising and falling took eight frames, or twelve frames, or whatever the beat happened to be. He said that these loops of film would then be projected on a screen that the orchestra could watch as they recorded the music.

STALLING: Yes, we did that for a while. We used the line moving up and down for the fifth and sixth Mickey Mouse cartoons, "The Op'ry House" and "When the Cat's Away," and then we started using the "tick" system on "The Skeleton Dance."

GRAY: How long was it that you had to record everything—the voices, the music, the sound effects—in one take?

STALLING: That was true at Disney's and for part of the time at Iwerks. But it was just two or three years until they had built a recording machine that would record three or four tracks at once onto a master negative. This is called "dubbing."

GRAY: When you were at Disney's, you must have arranged and conducted both.

STALLING: No, I had an arranger, but I conducted.

GRAY: You've told me that you were the first voice of Mickey Mouse; how many cartoons were made before he spoke?

STALLING: Not too many. They couldn't decide whether they wanted him to speak or not. I was his voice in only one picture. I don't recall the title [probably 'Wild Waves' (1930)] but Mickey was a lifeguard at the beach, and saved Minnie's life. She said, "My hero," and Mickey said, "Oh, shucks, that's nothin'," in a falsetto. One of the girls in the inking department did the voice for Minnie. I left not long after that, so I don't know what they did about Mickey's voice after that.[11]

During his tenure as the Disney studio's musical director, Carl Stalling composed the music for nineteen of the first twenty Disney sound cartoons. They are listed below in order; all are Mickey Mouse cartoons except for the Silly Symphonies, indicated by an (S).

Gallopin' Gaucho
Plane Crazy
The Barn Dance
The Op'ry House
When the Cat's Away
The Skeleton Dance(S)
The Barnyard Battle
The Plow Boy
The Carnival Kid
Mickey's Follies
El Terrible Toreador (S)
Mickey's Choo Choo
Springtime (S)
The Jazz Fool
Hell's Bells (S)
Jungle Rhythm
Merry Dwarfs (S)
The Haunted House
Wild Waves.

The second series of Disney cartoons began with two Silly Symphonies, "Summertime" and "Autumn," that continued Stalling's series based on the seasons, but Stalling doesn't believe that he scored them.

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(8) Bob Clampett has said that the action and music were synchronized for the first Looney Tune, in 1929, this way: Hugh Harman and Rudy Ising decided on a beat with their musician, then timed the cartoon on the sheets of written music, indicating so many frames for each action. The action was coordinated with the bars of music. The timing was transferred from the music sheet to exposure sheets, and then the music was recorded with the tick earphones. Hugh Harman has confirmed the accuracy of this description.

(9) For more on this, see footnote 4.

(10) Diane Disney Miller, in her 1956 biography, THE STORY OF WALT DISNEY, quotes her father as saying, "We drew a mark on our film every twelve frames with India ink. As that mark went through the projector, it made a white flash on the screen and if he watched for that flash and used it as a visual substitute for the tick-tock of an old-fashioned metronome, the man who was conducting our orchestra could stay on the beat."

Bob Clampett has pointed out that black india ink marks wouldn't make white flashes when projected, but rather black flashes, unless they projected the negative, which is of course extremely unlikely.

Wilfred Jackson believes that marks of some kind may have been used during the recording: "That might have been, they had to do a little work with it back in New York due to the fact that they didn't have a score that could be followed." Jackson believes there is nothing wrong with the synchronization.

(11) Minnie's voice for most of her career was supplied by Marcellite Garner (now Mrs. Richard Wall, Sr.) However, Mrs. Wall believes she began doing Minnie's voice by singing for the soundtrack of "The Cactus Kid" (1930), which was made after Stalling had left the Disney studio. Wilfred Jackson believes that "The Cactus Kid" was the first cartoon for which the dialogue was recorded in advance, so that the animation could be tailored to the dialogue. Before that, the voices were recorded when the music was recorded, and the dialogue had to be recorded to a beat, to synchronize it with the action.

Walt Disney himself did Mickey Mouse's voice most of the time up until the middle 1930s, when Jim MacDonald, a veteran sound effects man at the studio, began doing it. MacDonald also did the voices for Gus and Jacques in "Cinderella." One one occasion, while Walt was still doing Mickey's voice, Clarence Nash (better known as the voice of Donald Duck) filled in as Mickey while Walt was in Europe.

Mickey had spoken in cartoons before "Wild Waves," although his dialogue was limited, and (according to Mark Kausler, who has seen the film recently) in at least one early Mickey cartoon, "The Carnival Kid," Mickey speaks in a "most un-Mouse like voice."

GRAY: How was it decided that you were to do the voice for Mickey?
STALLING: Walt probably told me to try it. All the animators were taking a shot at it, those who wanted to. It was just a falsetto voice.
BARRIER: Did you ever do any other cartoon voices?
STALLING: Yes, I did a walrus voice [also in "Wild Waves"]. I sang "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," but instead of using the words of the song I just sang the syllable "wa" to each note of the music. It got a lot of laughs, especially on the last note, a low, low C.
SPICER: How did you finally decide to leave Walt?
STALLING: We had different offers, from other studios. Everybody said Walt was a failure, but I realized later that it was just a trick, that they just wanted to break Walt. I went with the "Aesop's Fables Studio," but I soon gave up that contract altogether. Ub Iwerks and I left Disney at about the same time, but we went our own ways. The thing was, I wasn't going to leave unless Ub left. When Ub left, I thought something was wrong. When Roy Disney told me that Ub was leaving, I told him, "Well, I guess I'll be leaving, too." It's not very pleasant to think about, because we were all good friends. But we were getting worried. Walt paid only half salary for a year or two, and I had a home and expenses. "Aesop's Fables" offered me about three times as much money.[12]
SPICER: How long did you stay with "Aesop's Fables"?
STALLING: A few months. I didn't work on any cartoons; they didn't have anything for me to do, they already had a musical director. It was all just a trick to break Walt. I couldn't live in New York, anyway. So, after free-lancing for a year or more I joined Ub's studio on Western Avenue, and was with him when he moved his studio to Beverly Hills.
BARRIER: Was Walt upset when you decided to leave?
STALLING: Yes, but he wasn't as upset as Roy, his brother. That was pretty hard. We were all very good friends, Walt and Roy and Ub and I. Of course, I owe everything to Walt Disney; he gave me that first break in Hollywood.

As I remember, Walt offered me a third of the Silly Symphonies, long before Ub and I left. I never had any stock in the Disney company, but I was to receive one third of the profits of the Silly Symphonies for as long as I worked at the studio. I accepted, but leaving Walt voided the agreement.

I was with Ub for six months or so, until 1932, when I left. I did some free-lance work and some arranging and piano playing for Walt. I worked on

(12) According to David Smith of the Disney Archives, Iwerks left the Disney studio on January 25, 1930, and Stalling left the same week.

Courtesy of Marcellite Wall and Bob Clampett

A 1932 recording session, during Stalling's second tour at the Disney studio. He is seated at the piano, near the center of the picture. The girl behind the piano is Marcellite Garner, the voice of Minnie Mouse. To her right is Burt Gillette, a Disney director, and to her left is Ted Sears, a Disney gag man. The bespectacled man in the left rear of the picture is Bert Lewis, who was the Disney musical director after Stalling left.

"The Three Little Pigs" and about ten other cartoons. I arranged the score and played the piano during the recording on all of them. When you see one little pig playing the piano in "The Three Little Pigs," you're hearing my playing.

That was the last Disney picture I worked on. In the summer of 1933, I rejoined Ub in Beverly Hills and stayed with him until I went to Warner Brothers in 1936.
BARRIER: I've always heard that Walt resented people's leaving him—did you see any evidence of that when you worked for him on "The Three Little Pigs"?
STALLING: None at all.

BARRIER: Did you ever see Walt in later years?

STALLING: Yes, and he was always very courteous. I called him once, after Warner's closed in 1953, for six months, and I asked him if there was any work there, and he said no, and asked me if I had any gray hairs. I said, "Yeah, what's left."
GRAY: Have you ever had any regrets about leaving Walt?
STALLING: No, except for pleasant associations. It was all very new and exciting. My leaving turned out better for Walt and it turned out better for me. At Warner Brothers, I could use a lot more popular songs; they didn't mind paying for them, as they had their own music publishing firm.

GRAY: Was there much difference in working for Walt and working for Ub and Warner's?
STALLING: No, it was about the same, with the advantage of experience.

GRAY: You were just salaried with Iwerks, weren't you? You weren't given a share of the studio?
STALLING: Right.
GRAY: Did you have an assistant at the Iwerks Studio?
STALLING: No, it was all mine, including the arranging.
BARRIER: How large an orchestra did they use at the Disney and Iwerks studios?
STALLING: Eight to twelve players. At Warner's we had as many as fifty or so, their main studio orchestra. We had a vocal group, too, once in a while. The chorus director wrote the music for them.
BARRIER: Did you go from Iwerks to Warner after the Iwerks studio closed, or was it still open when you left?
STALLING: It was closed, but I was idle for only a few weeks before I went to Warner's.
BARRIER: When you first came to Warner's, they had somebody else writing cartoon music, didn't they?
STALLING: They had a man who had had some trouble with Leon Schlesinger, who was making the cartoons at that time. I was hired to replace him, in 1936. I don't know what the trouble was about, but the inside of the music room desk was all cluttered with empty whiskey bottles.
BARRIER: Schlesinger knew of your work already?
STALLING: Oh, yes. There was a director and story and gag man working for Schlesinger named Ben Hardaway—they called him "Bugs"—who had been a newspaper cartoonist back in Kansas City, and I knew him there. He was also at Ub's, when I was there, and then he went to Schlesinger's. He was there when my predecessor was laid off, and he recommended me very highly to Schlesinger.
BARRIER: Now, after you went to work for Schlesinger, you were the only composer Warner's had until you retired?
STALLING: For the cartoons, yes, for twenty-two years. I retired in 1958.
BARRIER: Did your music differ much at

Carl Stalling conducting the Warner Brothers orchestra in 1937.

Warner's from what it had been at Disney's and Iwerks'?

STALLING: Yes, because at Warner's, I could use popular music. That opened up a new field so far as the kind of music we could use. At Disney's, we had to go back to the Nineteenth Century, to classical music, to "My Old Kentucky Home."

When I came out here, there was no law that cartoon music was copyrightable. That went into effect in the late Forties. Then they started paying royalties retroactive from the day I started with Warner Brothers. They're still paying, on the television reruns. Royalties are paid to composers whose music I used, and also to me for my original music.

GRAY: Apart from the increased use of popular songs, did you notice much of a change in your music over the years, as you composed it?

STALLING: It depended on the picture. When we had a very modern picture, I used as much music in the modern style as I could think up—augmented intervals, and so forth. But other than that, my style didn't change much.

BARRIER: Of your music for cartoons, how much was other composers' music that you reworked and how much was original?

STALLING: Eighty to ninety per cent was original. It had to be, because you had to match the music to the action, unless it was singing or something like that.

BARRIER: Were you ever ill, so that someone else had to be called in to do some cartoons for you?

STALLING: Yes, once. I had a brain operation in 1950. I bumped my head and a clot as big as my hand formed in between my skull and my brain. I was ill for four or five weeks. Gene Poddany, Chuck Jones' composer now, and Milt Franklyn filled in for me.

GRAY: They were making four cartoons every five weeks at Warner's back in the Forties, so you had to turn out almost one complete score every week. How did you turn out so much work?

STALLING: We had an arranger, of course. I would write the piano part—the basic, skeleton parts, you might say—and jot down all the cues and everything, then send it to the arranger, who worked at home. He arranged the music for orchestra, but whenever I wanted to feature an instrument or instruments in the orchestra, I'd make a notation. It took about a week, maybe eight days for me to prepare each score.

BARRIER: Did you ever get r e a l l y pressed for time?

STALLING: No, I had that schedule, and I stayed on time, although I sometimes had to do some homework in the evenings.

BARRIER: Were there ever any cartoons that you had trouble writing music for, where the music didn't seem to suggest itself naturally?

STALLING: No. You see, I had played in theaters for about twenty years before sound came in. We improvised all the time, on the organ. I'd have to put music out for the orchestra, for features, but for comedies and newsreels we just improvised at the organ. So I really was used to composing for films before I started writing for cartoons. I just imagined myself playing for a cartoon in the theater, improvising, and it came easier.

BARRIER: Did you have certain instruments that you liked to use more than others in your cartoon scores?

STALLING: The bassoon . . . the trombone, the slides on the trombone . . . the violin, with the glissandos, for comic effects. The viola is very good for mysterious effects.

GRAY: Did you ever record your music at Warner's before the exposure sheets were completed, so that the cartoon was fitted to the music?

STALLING: Yes, when there was a song, usually one that Mel Blanc sang. They'd indicate so many frames for each word on the exposure sheets.[13]

SPICER: Did you write the music for the opening of the Warner cartoons, with the shield and the bullseye?

STALLING: No, I selected it, but that was a tune already owned by Warner Brothers, "Merrily We Roll Along."

SPICER: How was the opening sound done, that "boinngg"?

STALLING: That was done with an electric guitar.

SPICER: Was the sound electronically altered?

STALLING: No, they just struck a chord and brought it down.

BARRIER: Playing for a cartoon score would he hard for many musicians to get used to, wouldn't it?

STALLING: The musicians said they enjoyed the cartoons more than anything else. They looked forward to coming down to record the cartoons. It was screwy stuff, you know.

A cartoon score was usually made up of about ten sections. We'd run through a section once or twice—usually just once—and then record it. We had a wonderful orchestra at Warner's. It took about three hours to record a cartoon score.[14]

GRAY: Did the directors show you the storyboards, and you then decided from that what music would be most suitable?

STALLING: That's right.

BARRIER: Did the directors tell you what they wanted in the way of music? Did they want a certain kind of music for particular scenes?

STALLING: As a rule, no. Sometimes they'd just want something with a twelve-beat for one sequence, and then maybe an eight-beat for the next sequence, and so on. Sometimes they'd build a whole picture around a song like "What's Up, Doc," which I wrote, but many popular songs were treated likewise, using the song title as the cartoon title.

I'd say Chuck Jones and Friz Freleng

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[13] Bob Clampett has said that songs were pre-scored for the Warner cartoons this way: Mel Blanc's singing would be recorded beforehand, but not the accompaniment. Blanc would sing in time with a tick record that he listened to through his earphones. The recording of Blanc's voice would be read off onto exposure sheets by Treg Brown, and given to the director of the cartoon. Stalling then wrote the musical score from the exposure sheets, including the accompaniment for Blanc's song. Stalling agrees with Clampett's account.

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[14] Bob Clampett has contributed his own memories of the recording sessions: "Many's the time that Carl, Treg [Brown] and I waited while the fifty-piece Warner Brothers orchestra would finish recording the score for a Bogart or Bette Davis feature, and then bat out one of my Bugs Bunny or Porky shorts. When Leo Forbstein [the orchestra's director] told them to put our cartoon score on their stands, a wave of relief would spread through the entire orchestra. Suddenly, two violinists would pop up and begin dueling with their bows, or some such horseplay. Others would call out things in jest, and by the time Carl stepped to the podium, raised his baton and they broke into the unnaturally rapid tempo of our Merrie Melodies theme song ('Merrily We Roll Along'), or subtitle, or whatever, they would be in a completely different mood for Bugs than for Bogey."

were the easiest directors to work with, because they had something there. Tex Avery was also great, and Bob Clampett was really inspiring, he really had ideas. He was a fascinating guy. I hated to see Bob go.

BARRIER: Were there any cartoon characters that it was especially enjoyable to write scores for, or did it make any difference?

STALLING: Each character had a different feeling, enjoyable, and, of course, very original, but there weren't any that were especially enjoyable to work with, unless it would be Bugs Bunny. He was the standout.

SPICER: Did you ever get tired of doing music for cartoons with "funny animals"?

STALLING: No, there were several directors at Warner's, and when you got through with one there was another one waiting for you. There was plenty of variety.

GRAY: Many times, you used the music to tell the story. In "Catch as Cats Can" (1947), Sylvester the cat swallowed a bar of soap and was hiccuping bubbles, and the music was "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles." Did you make up those gags yourself, or did the directors help you with that?

STALLING: It happened both ways.

BARRIER: You worked closely with the sound effects men, didn't you, to keep the music and sound effects co-ordinated?

STALLING: Yes; Treg Brown handled all the sound effects. Treg had thousands of sound effects on short reels, and he would make up a whole soundtrack out of these, as well as adding new ones for each cartoon. He had been there for three or four years when I came to Warner's. His room was next to mine.

BARRIER: Did you ever actually write your music so that a sound effect came out as part of the music?

STALLING: Yes, and sometimes I'd just lay out altogether and let the sound effect stand alone.

BARRIER: In some of Chuck Jones' Road Runner cartoons, there are long, involved gags for which there's no music; nothing is heard except the sound effects. Was this something Chuck wanted to do, or was this your idea?

STALLING: I don't remember, but I do remember that if the sound effect called for it, we'd stop the music altogether. And, of course, for a lot of the dialogue we would stop the music or we'd cut it down to just a few strings.

GRAY: Did you find a cartoon with lots of dialogue harder to compose for?

STALLING: Yes, because you don't dare drown out the voices. Sometimes on television, or in features, the music is way too loud, and you can't hear what they're saying. One trouble with cartoons today is that they do so much dialogue that the music doesn't mean much.

BARRIER: Was it your idea to use Mendelssohn's "Fingal's Cave" for the Minah Bird's walk in Chuck Jones' Inki cartoons?

STALLING: Yes, and it went over so well that we had to use it every time.

BARRIER: Did you ever suggest a cartoon idea to a director that would involve a certain kind of music? Did you, say, ever suggest to Chuck Jones that he might make a cartoon using a certain piece of classical music?

STALLING: It could be, but as a rule, he worked out the ideas first.

BARRIER: Did you ever do any composing for live-action features?

STALLING: I did one reel of a feature for Jack Benny, "The Horn Blows at Midnight," and it was just as bad as the picture, which was a big flop. I didn't want to do it, but Leo Forbstein, the orchestra's general musical director—he'd hire all the musicians—and head of the music department, wanted me to. I'd played with him in Kansas City theaters, the Royal and Newman Theaters. So when I came out here, I liked it much better at Warner Brothers than at Disney's, because of that association. We'd known each other and worked together for years. He played violin and I played piano, and sometimes for the morning shows, that's all we'd have for an hour or so, and then I'd go up and play the organ.

BARRIER: When you'd written your music, and had it ready to go, did anybody else have to look at it first and approve it before you recorded it?

STALLING: No, no one.

BARRIER: Was there ever a time when you'd recorded your music that somebody said something should be different, and wanted to change it?

STALLING: Yes once. Ray Heindorf, director of the Warner orchestra now, took Leo Forbstein's place when Leo passed on. He said a certain four bars sounded like the tune "Chicago." I thought I knew that tune, and I couldn't hear any similarity, but he had me change it. They didn't want anything that might cause a lawsuit over copyrighted music.

GRAY: Before you retired, did you start training other composers to take over your job? I know that some screen credits list you and another composer, Milt Franklyn.

STALLING: He was my arranger, and then he took over composing after I left. He died, I think in 1962. He was a very fine musician.

GRAY: What was your schooling before you went to work in the theaters?

STALLING: I had a private teacher; I started when I was six years old. My dad was a carpenter, and he found a broken toy piano. It was all broken to pieces and had little metal keys, like xylophone keys. One of them was missing, so he had to make one himself. He gave me a little frame box, and put the keys on that, and made some little hammers, and I started picking out tunes on that. That's how they started me studying piano.

BARRIER: So then you started formal study of the piano after that, when you were six, and really learned how to play it.

STALLING: Yes. I couldn't reach the pedal when I started playing; somebody had to pedal for me. I couldn't do the pedaling on the old church organs, either. I started playing them when I was eight or ten years old.

BARRIER: How old were you when you started playing in theaters?

STALLING: Seventeen or eighteen. I didn't finish high school; I only went two years. My ear gave me trouble and I couldn't hear the teachers, so I had to quit.

GRAY: So you couldn't hear too well even while you were composing all that music for Disney and Warner Brothers?

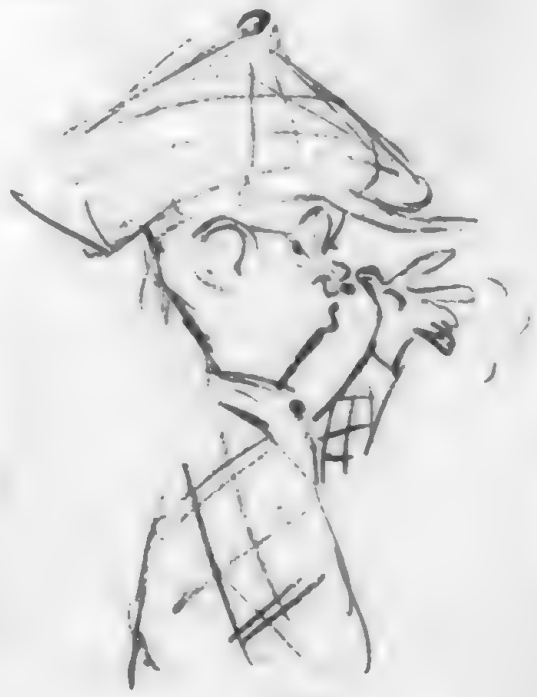
STALLING: I had trouble there, but the trouble was only in talking with the boys, not with the music.

GRAY: What was your very first job as a musician?

STALLING: I played the piano at a theater about a block from former President Truman's home in Independence, Missouri, around 1910. That was my first job in the Kansas City area, but I'd played the piano in 1904 at Lexington, where I was born. Lexington is forty miles east of Independence. In those days, they just wanted a piano going while the operator was changing reels. In the cities, they had two machines, so you didn't have to wait for the next reel, but in little towns like Lexington they hadn't gotten that far yet.

BARRIER: Do you remember when you saw your first movie?

STALLING: The first movie I ever saw was "The Great Train Robbery." I saw it in a tent at a street fair in Lexington, around 1903. It made such an impression on me that from then on I had only one desire in life: to be connected with the movies in some way.



A caricature of Carl Stalling by Mike Maltese, a Warner story man.

Proved Box

Walt Disney's NEW Ani

...and ... a preface ... which adjures the public ... to its duty to do what it can to put an end to murderous gangs.

On the same program is the first sound cartoon, produced by Walter Disney, creator of "Oswald the Rabbit." This current film is called "Steamboat Willie," and it introduces a new cartoon character, henceforth to be known as "Micky Mouse." It is an ingenious piece of work with a good deal of fun. It growls, whines, squeaks and makes various other sounds that add to its mirthful quality.

N.Y. TIMES - NOV. 19

"Steamboat Billie"
Walt Disney Cartoon
Real Entertainment

Type of production—Sound Cartoon in 1 reel.

This is what "Steamboat Willie" has. First, a clever and amusing treatment; secondly, music and sound effects added via the Cinephone method. The result is a real tidbit of diversion. The maximum has been gotten from the sound effects. Worthy of booking in any house wired to reproduce sound-on-film. Incidentally, this is the first Cinephone-recorded subject to get public exhibition and at the Colony, New York, is being shown over Western Electric equipment. Distribution has not been set.

FILM DAILY

"STEAMBOAT WILLIE"
Animated Cartoon
Powers Cinephone
7 Mins.
Colony, New York

Not the first animated cartoon to be synchronized with sound effects but the first to attract favorable attention. This one represents a high order of cartoon ingenunity cleverely combined with sound effects. The union brought forth laughs galore. Giggles came so fast at the Colony they were stumbling over each other.

It's a peach of a synchronization job all the way, bright, snappy and fitting the situation perfectly. Cartoonist, Walter Disney.

With most of the animated cartoons qualifying as a pain in the neck it's a signal tribute to this particular one. If the same combination of talent can turn out a series as good as "Steamboat Willie" they should find a wide market if interchangability angle does not interfere.

Recommended unreservedly for all wired houses. *Lend.*

VARIETY
NOV. 21

The Colon
Synchr
with M

EXHIBITORS

"STEAMBOAT

I WANT to thank Mr. ... ing me a laugh, one of t... a motion picture theatre ... The laugh came from his ... toon, "Steamboat Willie ... reel, and I was sorry it w... possible to describe this ... knocked me out of my s... to be 12 one reel cartoo... to see the next one.

FILM DAILY
Monday, November 19, 1928
Price 5 Cents

INTERCHANGEABILITY SHOWN WITH CINEPHONE SUBJECT

"Cinephone" Precedent Set by Colony Show

A precedent in the question of "interchangeability", exactly the opposite of the Hagerstown case, is set this week at The Colony Theatre on Broadway, New York, where the Walter Disney animated sound cartoon, "Steamboat Willie" with sound recording by Powers Cinephone, is being presented and reproduced on Western Electric device.

The Colony Theatre is equipped with Western Electric sound on film and disc reproducers. The Powers Cinephone recording is on the film and its reproduction at The Colony is on the same machine used for Movietone.

The Colony showing of the Disney cartoon also marks the first public presentation of the Powers Cinephone system. Film tests of the Powers Cinephone leading to the perfection of the machine have been going on during the past three years but they have all been shown privately.

The presentation of the Disney cartoon is also the premiere of a new series and a new comic character. It is also the first animated cartoon made especially for sound production, and as such it illustrates the perfection of synchronization that is possible when pictures are constructed especially for sound accompaniment.

Colony, N. Y., Is Playing Powers Film Over W. E. Sound Equipment

Another proof of interchangeability is being furnished this week at the Colony, New York, where "Steamboat Willie," first of the Powers' Cinephone shorts, opened yesterday. No attempt has been made to prevent showing of the picture, a one reel cartoon subject by Walter Disney.

Cinephone records by both the sound-on-film and discs, the subject in this instance being recorded on the film. The Colony is wired for Western Electric system of recording.

The Colony showing is the second demonstration of the interchangeability of a sound-on-film process. RCA-Photophone having been shown over Western Electric equipment in a number of theaters throughout the United States. The Colony showing is first public demonstration of Cinephone.

DAILY
REVIEW - NOV. 19

WEEKLY FILM REVIEW

Home From Broadway

By ANNA AIKEN PATTERSON

White Way was spent at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's ...ing a bright chapter in ...any big pictures on ...week—and several ...up for extended ... heavy sched...

...successf... stage ..., and ... clicked. ...n pict...e—begin- ...re... ...nd finish- ...g the dra- ... It centers ...uccessfully ... eventually ...er, goes ... a big ... De- ...ed

Eddie Gribbon and Walter Long portray the rival gang leaders and give convincing characterizations. There are but these four principals in the picture and they acquit themselves with abundan... ...lit. They are trou... "Gang War" is good enter...inment and it should make a strong s...ing for FBO. Robert Glennon is responsible for direction.

■ ■ ■

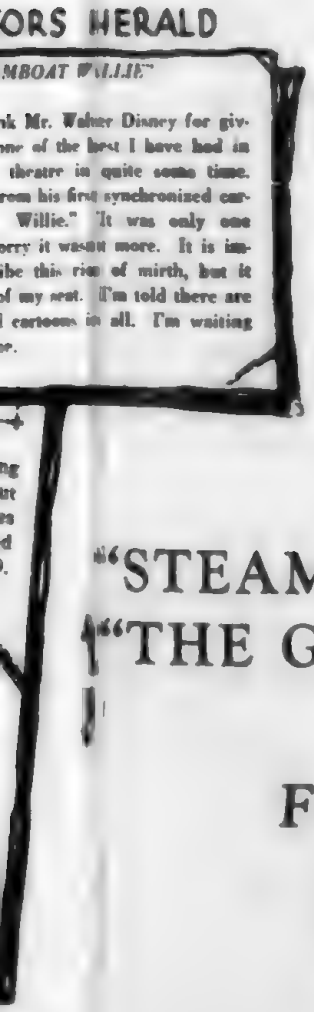
THE program at the Colony Theater could not be dismissed without mention of a short feature that made a tremendous hit—"Steamboat Willie," a Walt Disney cartoon, animated and with sound. It kept the audience laughing and chuckling from the moment the lead titles came on the screen, and left them applauding. Clever is a mild word to use in describing "Steamboat Willie." It is a wow!

Still more interesting is the fact that the subject is a Powers Cinephone production. The synchronization was made by the Cinephone method (sound on film) and was projected over Western Electric equipment (Movietone unit) at the Colony. That projection was without a flaw, so it does prove interchangeability between the Powers Cinephone equipment and Movietone equipment.

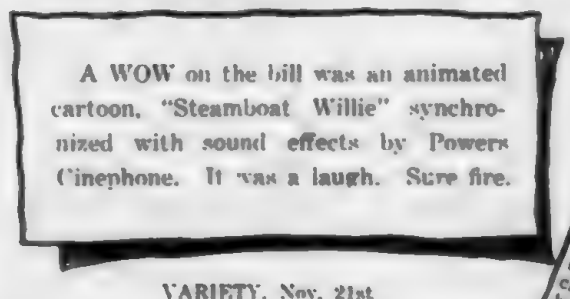
■

x-Office Value
imated Sound Cartoons

e HIT of the BILL at the
ony Theatre, Broadway, New York City
hronized by POWERS CINEPHONE System
Music and Sound Effects Recorded on the Film


ORS HERALD
AMBOAT WILLIE"
k Mr. Walter Disney for giv-
ne of the best I have had in
theatre in quite some time.
rom his first synchronized car-
Willie." It was only one
orry it was'nt more. It is im-
ibe this riot of mirth, but it
of my seat. I'm told there are
cartoons in all. I'm waiting
r.

The
"MICKEY MOUSE"
CARTOON SERIES
Are thè **FIRST** animated cartoons
MADE ESPECIALLY for **SOUND**


A WOW on the bill was an animated cartoon, "Steamboat Willie" synchronized with sound effects by Powers Cinephone. It was a laugh. Sure fire.

VARIETY. Nov. 21st

DISNEY ANIMATED CARTOONS IN SOUND

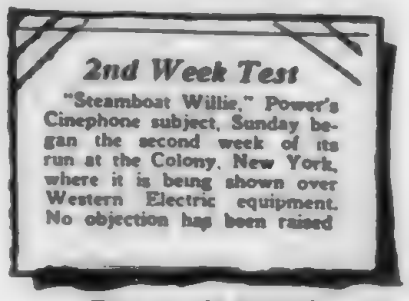
Four of a series of twenty-six new all sound animated cartoons to be made by Walter Disney, creator of the Oswald cartoons are now in work at the new Powers Cinephone studio in New York.

The new series are tentatively titled "Micky Mouse" with a mischievous little rodent as the comic hero. The first subject has been fully completed and three others will be ready for screening within the next week or ten days.

DAILY REVIEW— NOV. 14.

The First Four Subjects
"STEAMBOAT WILLIE" — "THE BARN DANCE"
"THE GALLOPING GAUCHO" — "PLAIN CRAZY"

NOW READY
For Pre-Release Bookings and Territorial Rights


2nd Week Test

"Steamboat Willie," Power's Cinephone subject, Sunday began the second week of its run at the Colony, New York, where it is being shown over Western Electric equipment. No objection has been raised

FILM DAILY— NOV. 26.

DISNEY CARTOONS
Powers Building, 723 Seventh Avenue, New York City

NOTES on the UNDERGROUND
CONFESSIONS of an UNDERGROUND COMICS PUBLISHER

By DENIS KITCHEN

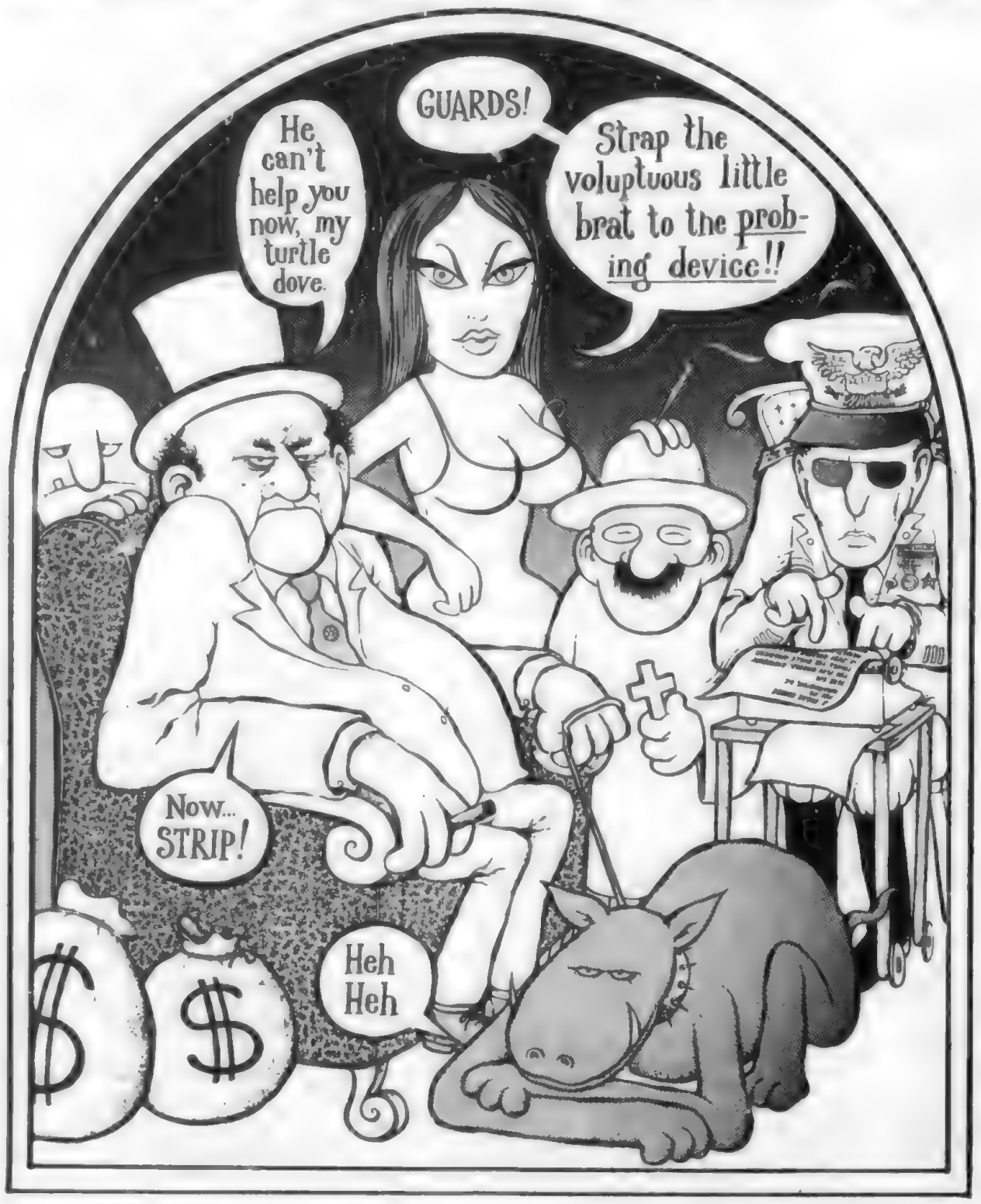
Krupp Comic Works, Inc., the world's fastest-growing underground comic book publisher, is not as big as its gargantuan German namesake.

Nor does it intend to be. Its intention is merely to publish as many top-quality comics as possible. To become successful doing so might be hypocritical. Already, many in the hip subculture consider us "rip-off capitalists" or "sexist pigs." And, needless to say, most of straight society consider us "pornographers" or "subversive bums." But we struggle on.

And in the hectic, dog-eat-dog publishing biz, one thing has remained constant: the struggle. Krupp's origin dates back to late 1968, when Kitchen Sink Enterprises published MOM'S HOMEMADE COMICS No. 1 for Milwaukee consumption. Kitchen Sink consisted of me and a hustling roommate, Bill Kauth. MOM'S No. 1 was soon reprinted, in a revised edition, by the Print Mint, a Berkeley-based poster and comic publisher. And problems began.

The Print Mint was clearly a money-minded organization. Production was slow, payments to artists were slower, receipts of press runs were nonexistent, and communication was impossible. Jay Lynch and Skip Williamson, authors of BIJOU FUNNIES were forced to use legal action to collect the royalties due on their comics. Similar problems were experienced by Wendel Pugh, whose GOOGIEWAUMER COMICS No. 1 was another Print Mint publication.

Clearly, an intolerable situation existed. The only other significant underground comics publisher, Rip Off Press, was rumored to be financially ailing, its printing quality was not good, and its San Francisco location made communication with the midwest cartoonists difficult. Thus, with lofty goals and seedy partners (unnamed here) I formed Kumquat Productions. After publishing two books, TEEN-AGE HORIZONS OF SHANGRILA No. 1 and QUAGMIRE No. 1, Kumquat folded. However, the creation of SHANGRILA brought me into contact with two previously unpublished Milwaukee cartoonists, Don Glassford and Jim Mitchell. (A meeting with profound historical implications.) The three of us and Michael Herman, a semi-wealthy comic book freak (and in cooperation with several other cartoonists) established Krupp Comic Works, Inc.



Denis Kitchen, in MOM'S HOMEMADE COMICS No. 3.

Kitchen Sink Enterprises, now the comic book division of Krupp, has published, to date: BIJOU No. 5, MOM'S No. 3, DEEP 3-D COMICS No. 1, SMILE NO. 1, and GOOGIEWAUMER No. 2, in addition to distributing SHANGRILA, QUAGMIRE, and the earlier issues of MOM'S and GOOGIEWAUMER. DEEP, the creation of Don Glassford, is the world's first underground 3-D comic, and the first new 3-D comic of any kind in fifteen years.

New titles to appear in 1971 include HOMEGROWN FUNNIES, a new book by Robert Crumb; SENILE COMIX, featuring senior citizen frolics; SCHLURP, a comic which almost had a 400,000-copy national distribution until unscrupulous distributors forced a change of plans; BEER CITY COMICS, Milwaukee's equivalent of Crumb's MOTOR CITY COMICS; HUNGRY CHUCK BISCUITS, by teen-age Chicago artist Dan Clyne; new editions of BIJOU, MOM'S, SMILE, and SHANGRILA; and PROJUNIOR COMICS, an anthology of one-pagers by every major underground cartoonist based on the character created by the unheralded Don Dohler.

Another division, the Krupp Syndicate, syndicates five weekly comic strips to university and underground newspapers throughout the country: "Kabibblerfunnies" by Bruce Walthers, "Smile" by Mitchell, "Studley" by Glassford,

THE KRUPP PEOPLE: A SELF PORTRAIT. Back row, Denis Kitchen, Jim Mitchell and Skip Williamson. Front row, Jay Lynch, Don Glasstord, Bruce Walthers and Wendel Pugh. Drawn especially for FUNNYWORLD.

"Fenster Sitzen" by Pugh, and "Little Ingrid" by myself. It is hoped that the syndicate will make enough money to subsidize the comic book operation, which is our true love.

The prime difficulty in publishing underground comics is distribution. Each month, Marvel and DC churn out several million comic books, which are quickly and efficiently distributed to every corner drugstore in North America. But due to the sexual, political, and generally irreverent nature of underground comics, most straight outlets simply refuse to carry them. And, following logically, profit-oriented national distributors also refuse to touch them.

We are thus forced to rely, almost entirely, on a mail-order system. Compiling a list of reliable outlets is a major problem. "Headshops" are the most likely commercial outlets for the comics. A catalog with four-color cover and "eight-pager" format was mailed to potential outlets all over the continent. The response has been promising, but frustrating as well. Many headshops have short life spans. Mailing lists soon become outdated. And many others, perpetually poor, require credit extensions. Hard business experience, alas, has shown that only by accepting prepaid and C.O.D. orders can we survive.

Capitalist economics dictate other hassles as well. Marvel and DC print a half million or so of each monthly title, which results in a small per-book printing cost. In our relatively small runs of ten thousand, basic printing costs are ten cents per book. (It is difficult enough to find a printer willing to print underground material.) Marvel and DC also obtain significant revenue by devoting a large share of their books to advertising. We refuse to carry ads on aesthetic grounds. Further, it is doubtful that our audience would tolerate advertising.

Then, of course, the artists must be paid a fair share. And then the middle men, the wholesalers and retailers, demand large chunks. All this results in a fifty-cent price tag, which no doubt discourages some sales. With luck, there is enough profit from one book to print another. And luck, as we all know, is a fickle mistress. One bad-selling book can be disastrous for all.

With nobody getting rich off underground comics, or even reasonably comfortable, one might ask, "Why do it?" I ask myself that each time I open the refrigerator.

The big appeal is the total freedom involved in producing these comics. No boss . . . no nine-to-five workday . . . no restrictions on subject or style . . . no absolute deadlines. And yet, in this seemingly anarchistic climate, artists who might ordinarily be turning out uninspired work for straight comic companies or ad agencies are developing an innovative genre, with sometimes brilliant results.

And, while not united in any particular direction, we are all instinctively dealing with the oppression, injustice, and absurdities we observe . . . things we feel can't be dealt with in our media by introducing token black characters or by replotting traditional comics so slumlords replace outer-space villains. By ridiculing the outmoded social system we live in, we are quickening its demise. And in its place, hopefully, will be established a society in which no "underground" is necessary.

In the meantime . . . got any spare change?

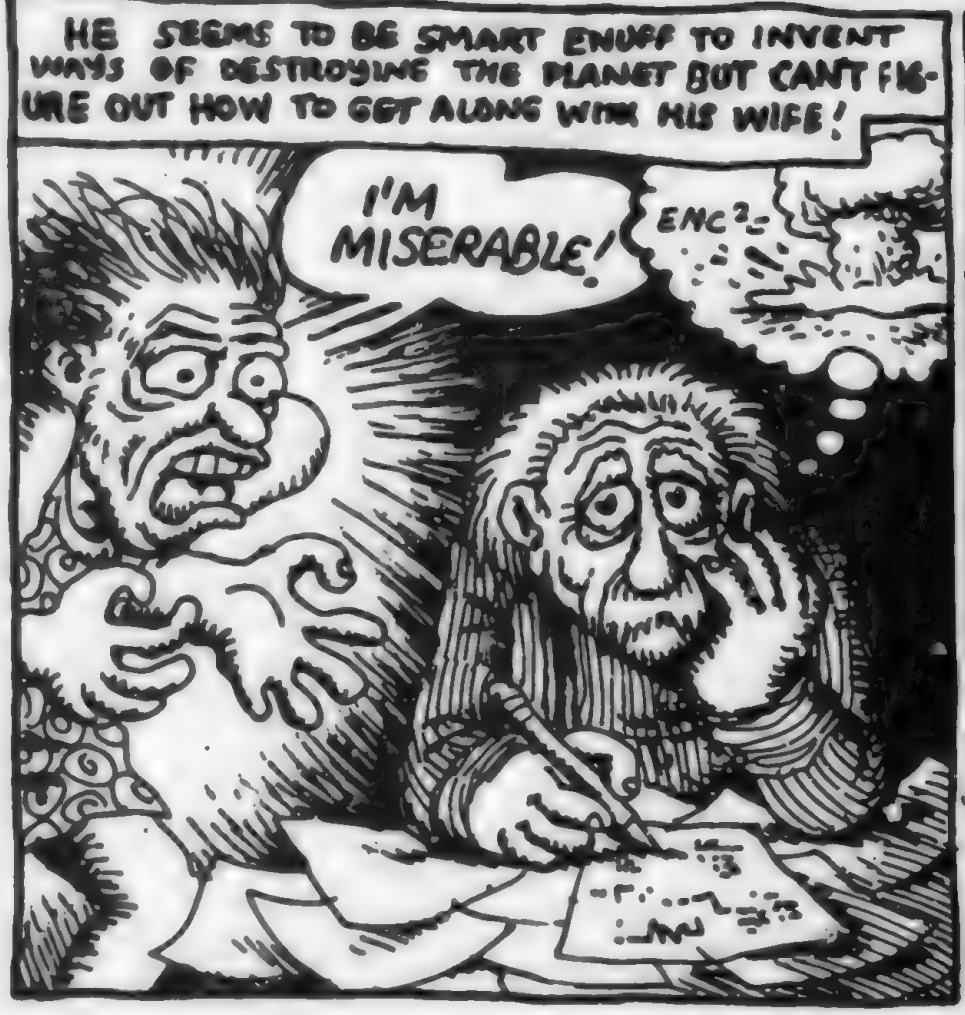
NOTES ON THE UNDERGROUND

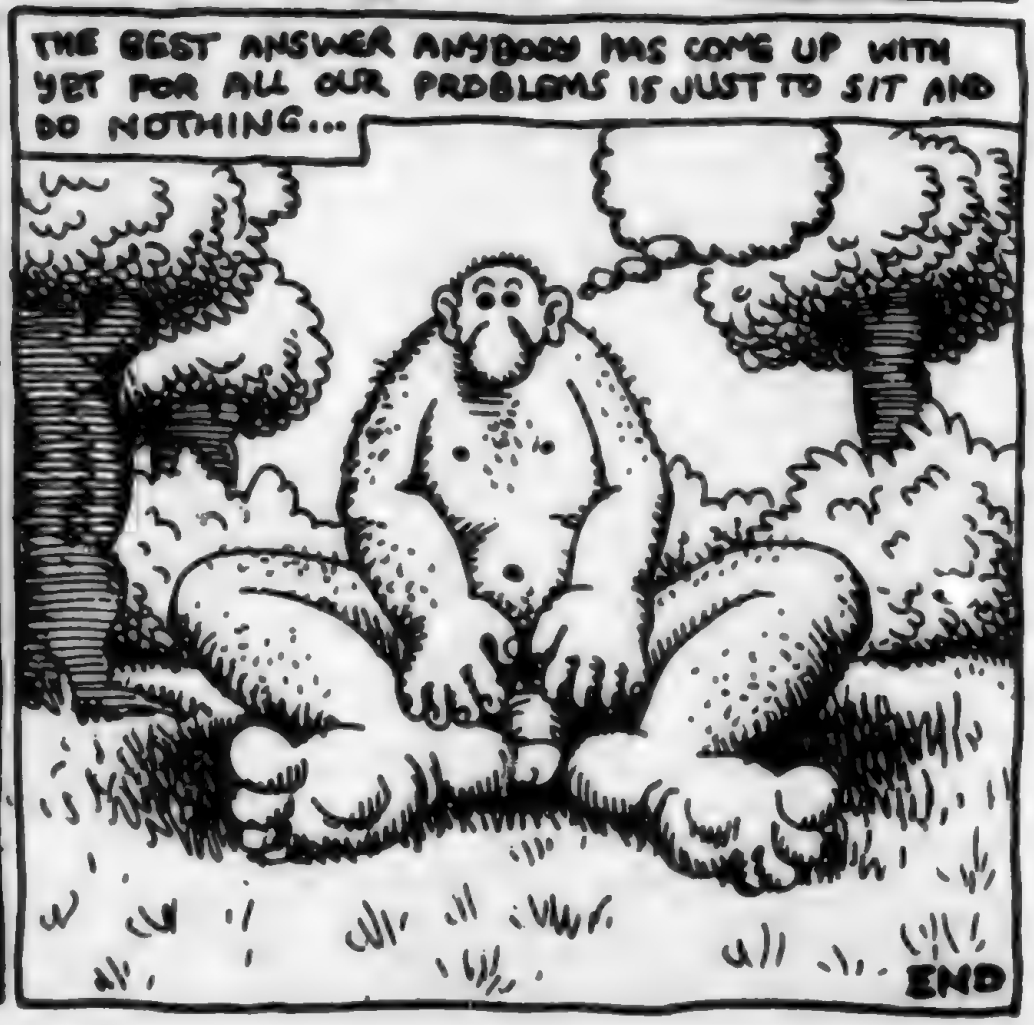
ROBERT CRUMB

And The

HUMAN COMEDY

...AND ENDS UP OLD AND EMBITTERED, REGRETFUL OF SHATTERED DREAMS, FEELING CHEATED BY FATE, HIS DAYS FILLED WITH ACHES AND PAINS SO THAT HE LOOKS FORWARD TO DEATH!!


HE SEEMS TO BE SMART ENUFF TO INVENT WAYS OF DESTROYING THE PLANET BUT CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET ALONG WITH HIS WIFE!
I'M MISERABLE!
ENC²=
MC²



By HARVEY PEKAR

In his work, Robert Crumb generally portrays the world as a sideshow and the people in it as freaks. He sometimes shows compassion for his characters, but he almost always views them in a humorous light. Crumb laughs at everybody, regardless of race, creed, color or national origin. He views his role as a cartoonist as that of producing work that is funny. If it's profound, as it sometimes is, that's a bonus.

In his "Life among the Constipated," he makes fun of lower-middle-class whites, the kind of people he grew up among. This isn't too startling. A cartoonist whose audience contains a lot of young people who are political leftists is on safe ground when he gives hard-hat America the razzberry.

But Crumb doesn't stop there. He puts down and makes fun of blacks as well as whites. Angelfood McSpade and the jiveass guy who gets the chick away from Percy and Sy in "The Lighter than Air Boys" (in DESPAIR) and the black nationalists who try to shakedown Shuman the Human in MR. NATURAL do not add up to a very flattering picture of contemporary black Americans. Some of Crumb's readers apparently can't believe that he is as capable of expressing condescension toward blacks as he is toward whites. Thus, ROLLING STONE reports that Angelfood McSpade has been viewed as "a symbol of the deep-rooted basis of American race prejudice." She isn't, any more than Beulah was.

Crumb has also made fun of Chinese and Jews. He's democratic—he ridicules everyone.

Crumb bends over backward to avoid pretentiousness and artiness. His "Abstract-Expressionist Ultra Super Modernistic Comics" is, in fact, intended partly as a satire, a put-down of "arty" modern art. Anti-intellectualism can be detected in his attitude toward Shuman the Human.

He usually doesn't try to put into his work moral and political messages like Spain Rodriquez's "Fight the oppressor" or Charles Biro's (you remember Biro—one of the great moralists of our time) "Crime does not pay." Insofar as he has political views, he is sympathetic to leftists. (In the course of some discussions Crumb and I had last September, for example, he was quite critical of capitalism, describing it as an unsound system that had to expand like a plague to live. I think the implication of his remarks was that capitalism would eventually run out of resources and people to exploit and burn itself out, i. e. capitalism carries the seeds of its own destruction.)

However, it seems to me that some of Crumb's best work may be his preachiest. His two "Lenore Goldberg and Her Girl Commandos" stories, which are satires of the women's liberation movement, and his "It's Really Too Bad," one of the most overtly philosophical things he's ever done, are outstanding, really meaty pieces.

In the Lenore Goldberg stories, which appear in MOTOR CITY COMICS, Crumb comes closer to taking a political stand than he does in anything else I've seen by him. He pokes fun at Lenore and her friends but portrays them sympathetically. He pictures policemen as stupid and one particular FBI type in the second Lenore story as an evil, bigoted dirty old man.

One panel in the first Lenore story is especially notable. In it, a policeman is shown pounding Lenore's girlfriend's head on the sidewalk in a pool of her own blood while he screams, "You're sick, you're sick." If this panel were lifted out of the story and printed by itself it would make an excellent Herblock-type political cartoon.

But even in these Lenore Goldberg stories, Crumb does not sustain his angry criticism of today's political injustices. The first story ends with Lenore performing an oral sex act on her boyfriend as he says, "Viva la revolucion." It's as if Crumb is saying that what's most important to Lenore is sex, not politics.

In the second story, Lenore escapes from the police and finds safety living in a commune in Canada, where she has a baby. Her girl friend from her days in the women's lib movement comes to visit her and upon seeing her with her son, says in surprise, " . . . I never thought I'd see the day when you'd—." Lenore interrupts her to say, "Well, y'know . . . life goes on and things change . . . " Then Crumb ends the story with, "Will Lenore Goldberg turn out to be a Jewish mother? Only time will tell."

This is a very funny way to end the story but, in a sense, an unsatisfactory way. During most of the story Crumb is behind Lenore and her movement but at the end he makes fun of her, as if he's reproaching himself for taking her so seriously. His "always-leave-'em-laughing" endings to both stories seem to be an attempt to make up for what he considers to be the preachiness in the stories. In response to my praising these stories he remarked that they were rather preachy. Frankly, I think he's overly concerned about getting too serious.

"It's Really Too Bad" deals with the hopelessness of it all. After showing panel after panel of miserable people suffering, crying out for help and not receiving it, searching for answers and not finding them, Crumb concludes with a panel showing a big, naked, childlike moron sitting with an empty thought balloon over his head. Above him is Crumb's comment, "The best answer anybody has come up with yet for all our problems is to sit and do nothing."

"It's Really Too Bad" is a very funny piece, due partly to Crumb's skill at caricature, but it's also a grim, sad piece in which Crumb, perhaps despite himself, is quite serious. The anger and pain and emptiness in the lives of the people he draws can be clearly seen in their faces. When you see a wife with her eyes bulging out screaming, "I'm miserable" at her melancholy-looking scientist husband (a caricature of Albert Einstein), you'd better believe Crumb isn't just kidding around.

Crumb is no bleeding heart, but he's aware of all the people who lead lives of desperation, quiet and otherwise. He was brought up in a strongly Catholic environment and knows firsthand the problems religious hangups can cause. He was raised among working people, wasting their lives working at boring, tiring jobs. He's seen some of his friends turn to drugs for relief and destroy themselves.

"It's Really Too Bad" is not typical of Crumb's work, but he has done a number of other pieces that accurately and powerfully portray alienated, tormented people, e. g. "Just Us Kids," "Duck's Yas Yas," "Whiteman," "Dirty Dog." Crumb seems to have an ambivalent attitude toward these people; he feels sorry for them while laughing at them. Maybe that's what the human comedy is all about.

For a free catalog listing all the Krupp comic books, write Krupp Comic Works, Inc., 2560-A North Frederick Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211. The Krupp artists are also represented in the weekly BUGLE-AMERICAN, published at Milwaukee. Subscriptions are $2.50 for twelve issues, $5.00 for twenty-five issues, and $9.00 for fifty issues. The address is 2909 North Humboldt Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212.

REVIEWS:

TRIPLE TRIPLE TRIPLE FEATURE

A BOY NAMED CHARLIE BROWN. Produced by Lee Mendelson and Bill Melendez. Directed by Melendez. (Cinema Center Films)

THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH. Produced by Chuck Jones. Co-produced by Abe Levitow and Les Goldman. Directed by Jones and Levitow. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)

THE ARISTOCATS. Produced by Wolfgang Reitherman and Winston Hibler. Directed by Reitherman. (Walt Disney Productions)

By MIKE BARRIER

Feature cartoons were once impossibilities, then rarities. Now, finally, they are program fillers. The techniques developed for television have made it so easy to turn out long cartoons that they turn up in distressingly large numbers at special children's matinees. You've noticed the advertisements for them, even if you haven't had the stomach to go see them. They have names like "Santa and the Three Bears," "The Man From Button Willow" and "Alakazam the Great," and many are made overseas, perhaps by wizened little men chained to their drawing boards.

Recently, it has become impossible to escape this sort of stuff even by staying home and avoiding the Saturday morning children's hours. For example, over the holiday season, CBS showed several long cartoons made in Australia. The word "animator" is a gift word, as Chuck Jones says, and precious few people have earned the right to it in recent years; the Australians who made these cartoons ("A Connecticut Yankee," "A Christmas Carol" and two Washington Irving stories) are not among their number.

They gave themselves away in the opening moments of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," when, in an introductory scene, the fearful Ichabod Crane entered Sleepy Hollow. If you have seen Frank Thomas' animation of this scene in Disney's "The Adventures of Ichabod and Mr. Toad" (1949), you know that no one could do it better, and for an animator not even to try—for an animator to take the easiest, sleaziest, crummiest way out, as the Australian who drew this scene did—is an insult to Thomas, and a confession of artistic bankruptcy. The Australians who made these cartoons are mechanics with pencils. The terrible thing is that they have so many brothers on this side of the ocean.

This flood of foreign junk and domestic disasters has destroyed the feature cartoon in the way that short cartoons were destroyed long ago: almost all of them—even the best—have been branded with the stigma of banality. The sole survivor is the Disney studio, which set the pattern for animated features (although it was not, strictly speaking, the first to make one) and is the only studio to have produced a large number of animated features of high quality. The Disney cartoons are still assured of a warm reception from both exhibitors and the public.

There was an exception last year to the Disney monopoly. It was a very special case, since it was, like the Charlie Brown television specials, freeloading on the enormous public affection for the "Peanuts" comic strip. So strong is the "Peanuts" grip that "A Boy Named Charlie Brown," the first "Peanuts" feature, was the first non-Disney cartoon ever booked by Radio City Music Hall, and only the third feature cartoon ever to be shown there.

"A Boy Named Charlie Brown" needed all the goodwill it could borrow, since it suffers from all the shortcomings of the television shows and is afflicted by some new ones of its own. The success of the "Peanuts" cartoons is proof of the comic strip's hold on the public, since only an audience that looks at "Peanuts" through a lover's eyes could accept the clumsy, watered-down cartoons that are trading on its name.

The animation of the TV specials, and of "A Boy Named Charlie Brown," is simply not good enough. "Peanuts"—a relatively static, simply staged comic strip—is made to order for **sophisticated** limited animation. Instead, the Bill Melendez cartoons look starved for drawings. Melendez, like many animators, hasn't learned that full-animation ideas require full animation. You can't fake it. For example, there is no sense of weight or mass in his animation, and some of his gags require it. Melendez's animation provides only the bare bones of a movement or an emotion, and the audience must provide the rest. Good animation, limited or full, is different; it is the essence, not an outline.

The cartoons are drawn in a reasonable approximation of Charles Schulz's style, but that's all. Schulz's subtle facial expressions are used mechanically, without any sensitivity to the characters' personalities and moods. Melendez seems to use them just to remind us of the comic strip, whereas Schulz always uses a particular expression for a particular purpose.

The timing of the Melendez cartoons is poor; there is an aching lack of any surprise, of any delight in the unexpected. (I can think of only one such moment in "A Boy Named Charlie Brown," when Linus, in Charlie Brown's hotel room, cries out in anguish over the loss of his blanket.)

The voices in the "Peanuts" cartoons are fundamentally miscast, although I doubt that they could have been cast properly. The children in the comic strip are not real children, but are instead children who react to children's problems in adult ways, and in adult language. It's the way that Schulz weaves variations on this basic incongruity—distracting our attention from it in one strip, homing in on it in the next—that makes "Peanuts" such a joy, and gives it its special appeal. Schulz has the ability, vital to a popular artist, to repeat himself constantly, but always seem fresh and new. Among animators, Chuck Jones has had this gift, too.

If real children could speak the "Peanuts" lines with full understanding, they would be monsters—and that is precisely what the lines call for. Fortunately, Schulz's dialogue is so strong that not even miscast voices and bad animation can destroy it. I think adults capable of good children's voices would be preferable in the parts, but on the other hand, the children's voices are appealing in themselves, and may very well contribute to the audience's affection for the show.

What is curious is the failure to give Snoopy a voice—not to converse with the children, of course, but to speak the "thoughts" that provide so much of the comedy in the comic strip. (Snoopy speaks in the stage version of "Peanuts," "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," and was, in the production I saw, the most effective member of the cast.) Instead, in the cartoons, Charlie Brown tells us what Snoopy is thinking—and that is certainly false to the strip. Perhaps Melendez and Schulz have been trying to avoid any associations in the audience's mind with "talking-animal" cartoons. (Schulz all but said as much, in an interview last summer in the Los Angeles TIMES: "I prohibited animation tricks—no running into trees and that kind of thing.")

"A Boy Named Charlie Brown" contains animation "tricks" of another

kind, unfortunately—the visual stunting that has become **de rigueur** in animated features since "Yellow Submarine." (There is a lot of it in "The Phantom Tollbooth" and even a trace in "The Aristocats.") All this playing around with shapes and colors and movement was done much better by Walt Disney in the Forties, before anyone had heard of the word "psychedelic," and a lot of it wasn't much good even then. (James Agee, in a review of "Saludos Amigos," refers to its "kitschy ingenuities with color.") "A Boy Named Charlie Brown" lacks the elaborate blossomings and metamorphoses of "The Phantom Tollbooth," relying instead on multiple screens, flag-based abstractions (while "The Star-spangled Banner" is played), and a sickly imitation of "Fantasia" (while Schroeder plays part of a Beethoven sonata) that has embarrassed even the movie's admirers.

This neutered, tea-shoppe animation seems to be what Schulz really wants, even if the precise results are not exactly what he had in mind. "I wish it had been perfect," he has been quoted as saying of the movie. "I think some of the TV shows were very nearly perfect, but the movie could have been better." I haven't detected any cynicism in anything that Schulz has said about the movie. I doubt that he is capable of cynicism, but I also doubt that he is capable of delivering his characters into the hands of a strong-willed, creative cartoon-maker. Such a director might make "Peanuts" cartoons far more interesting than Melendez's, but also much further removed from Schulz's intentions. Melendez's cartoons, for all their deficiencies, do preserve the surface texture of the comic strip, and that was probably most important to Schulz. "Generally, I don't like other people's ideas," he told the TIMES. "I like them to be my own."

At least the "Peanuts" cartoons wear their good intentions like a badge. That is more than can be said for the great bulk of today's cartoons, whose poverty of spirit stares bleakly at the audience from every frame.

In these circumstances, it's not too surprising that Chuck Jones' MGM feature, "The Phantom Tollbooth," should have been dumped on the market so gracelessly by the studio's new management. "Tollbooth" has not been given even the dignity of a burial at the bottom half of a double bill, but has been offered as part of a package called "MGM Children's Matinees," made up mostly of hoary reissues like "The Wizard of Oz" and "Flipper." "Tollbooth" slips into a city for maybe six matinee showings one weekend, and then vanishes, perhaps to return one day on television.

To be thus lumped together with "Santa and the Three Bears" must be galling

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THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH: Milo and the Lethargians in the Doldrums.

to the men who made "The Phantom Tollbooth," since it is a cartoon on which were lavished skills that are in pitifully short supply in today's animation industry. If they are in fact bitter, their bitterness has no doubt been increased by the Disney studio's blitzkrieg in behalf of "The Aristocats," its newest animated feature. The Disney people are old hands at publicity, and I doubt that there are very many children in the United States who have not heard of "The Aristocats" by now. Surely they vastly outnumber the children who have heard of—much less seen—"The Phantom Tollbooth."

But I doubt that even a massive publicity campaign could have saved "Tollbooth"; it is fatally deficient in a way that "Aristocats" is not. Both films' stories are weak, but the Disney cartoon triumphs over its handicaps. The Jones cartoon does not. "The Aristocats" was saved because Wolfgang Reitherman and his co-workers, although they are obviously trying to shake free of Walt Disney's mantle in some ways, have not yet forgotten the most fundamental lessons he taught them. "The Phantom Tollbooth" was stillborn because Chuck Jones has forgotten some lessons he learned in his years as a director at Warner Brothers.

Norton Juster's THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH, published ten years ago, is a children's novel that has been compared with ALICE IN WONDERLAND. That is blasphemous (if you are a Carroll worshiper) or silly (if you are not). A more apt comparison might be with PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, since both books are allegories distinguished by their moral earnestness.

Chuck Jones' feature (which is animated except for brief live-action sequences at the beginning and end) sticks closely to the book for the most part, dropping a few of the less memorable chapters and rearranging events slightly.

The book stresses words and how they are used (much of its humor comes from taking everyday expressions literally; when Milo "jumps to a conclusion" in his mind, he also leaps out of his car, involuntarily, and onto an island called Conclusions), so the movie is wordy, too. This is a serious burden for an animated feature, for this reason: when animation stretches and compresses reality, it distorts time, too. But dialogue, if it is to be intelligible, must be paced like normal speech, or close to it. This is why, in many cartoons, the **sound** of a voice—like Donald Duck's—is much more important than what the voice says. The voice helps define the character's personality, without getting in the way of the animation. But if the animation must yield to **words** then the animator's choices are limited. This isn't a fatal burden, of course—some Disney features are quite talky, and no less effective for that—but if dialogue is important to a cartoon, then the director must handle his material very carefully. Otherwise, action and dialogue will work against one another, instead of in tandem.

Jones' best cartoons have been in pantomime, or close to it, and that may ex-

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JONES: "NIGHT WATCHMAN"

The Phantom Tollbooth" is Chuck Jones' first feature cartoon, and perhaps that accounts for its failure. There is little in Jones' short cartoons for Warner Brothers to suggest that this was where he was headed. The emphasis in Jones' Warner cartoons is on the characters—on personality—and he achieved a psychological precision that no one else in animation has ever matched.

He hadn't achieved it when he started as a director, in 1938, with "The Night Watchman." Many of Jones' early cartoons are slow and heavy, and there are long closeups with subtle shifts in facial expressions. They were supposed to be subtle, anyway; usually, they are just obscure, or, worse, overworked and precious. These cartoons ("The Bird Came C.O.D.," "Good Night, Elmer," most of the Sniffles cartoons, a series of half a dozen cartoons involving two dogs, among others) have the look of strained and unsuccessful Disney imitations. The drawing and the animation are smooth and natural, but they have no point; they don't go anywhere.

By the middle Forties, Jones' cartoons were changing. The more obviously "brilliant" Warner directors—Avery, Tashlin and Clampett, all of whom made cartoons with more dash and glitter than Jones'—had left or were leaving, and Jones came into his own when left in the company of Friz Freleng and Robert McKimson (and, for a few years, Art Davis). He began to use stronger poses and crisper cutting, forsaking the self-conscious subtlety of his early cartoons.

There are hints of this by 1942, in, for example, a Bugs Bunny cartoon called "Hold the Lion, Please," which is less of a disaster than most of Jones' early Bugs Bunny cartoons. The early Bugs, as shaped by Tex Avery and Bob Clampett, was a wild, aggressive, vulgar smart-aleck, teetering always on the line between the funny and the offensive. Later, when both those directors had left Warner's, Jones transformed Bugs into what he calls a "counter-revolutionary," a much more interesting and sympathetic character than the earlier "wild hare." But Jones' first few Bugs Bunny cartoons are flabby; Bugs couldn't be digested into the early Jones style.

"Hold the Lion, Please" has a little of the snap and vigor that distinguish Jones' later cartoons, but "The Dover Boys" (also 1942) may have been the watershed. Its sharply defined poses, which Jones evidently used to suggest the daguerreotypes of the 1800s, were just the tonic his cartoons needed, and soon all of his cartoons were benefitting from such poses and their corollary, a much stronger editing rhythm. Starting around 1943, and on until the late 1950s, Jones made his finest cartoons—"Fresh Airedale," "Feed the Kitty," "To Itch His Own," "One Froggy Evening," "What's Brewin', Bruin," "Duck Amuck," "Bear Feat," to mention only a few from a very long list. Jones, having found a style into which Bugs Bunny would fit, began tailoring Bugs to his own tastes in a series of cartoons of increasing excellence—"Hair Raising Hare," "Hare Conditioned," "Long Haired Hare," "Bunny Hugged," "What's Opera, Doc?" and many others.

But it is in the series with characters he alone used—not those he shared with other directors--that Jones shows his special genius. Like some Eighteenth Century composer, Jones polishes and re-uses his ideas, each time showing us some facet that we hadn't noticed before. There is a good deal of this in the Pepé le Pew and Sheep Dog cartoons, but the pegs on which those series are hung—Pepe's infatuation with a cat whom he mistakes for a female skunk, and the Sheep Dog's omnipresence—aren't as fundamental or as flexible as the Coyote's desire to eat the Road Runner. Jones' Road Runner series is probably the finest series of cartoons ever made, because of its delicate emotional and intellectual balance. From cartoon to cartoon, Jones puts increasing emphasis both on ringing changes on a few basic gags and on the Coyote's emotional response to his repeated failures.

The Road Runner cartoons—like many of Jones' cartoons from this period—are characterized by strict economy and an intensity that is never overbearing. Jones uses his new tools—strong poses, brisker cutting—to focus his characters' emotions, and conflict as such is de-emphasized. His two-character cartoons, using established "stars" like Daffy Duck, Porky Pig and Elmer Fudd ("Little Orphan Airedale" and "A Pest in the House" [both 1947] are good examples) are merely excellent. So are most of his music-based cartoons, like "Rabbit of Seville" (1951) and "What's Opera, Doc?" (1957), but these cartoons have a special charm because of Jones' obvious delight in classical music. If Walt Disney was, as some writers have said, a man who fell asleep at Hollywood Bowl concerts, Chuck Jones calls to mind a small boy who conducts imaginary orchestras. His interest in music goes far beyond "mickey-mousing"; as long ago as 1946, he contributed an article to FILM QUARTERLY in which he spoke expansively of the potential uses of music in animation.

Jones evidently holds his classical-music cartoons in special esteem—I have been told that he measures his friends by how they respond to his Wagner parody, "What's Opera, Doc?" — but he is basically an intimate artist, and his more modestly scaled cartoons include his best. There's "Fresh Airedale" (1945), for example, a cartoon that is simultaneously joyous and cynical; at the close, a terribly misused cat pounds on the base of the statue of Justice, bawling in frustration,and the scales fall onto his head.

The lean times on which cartoons fell in the late Forties seem not to have hurt Jones; his psychological insights into his characters were given shape by the sort of poses and cutting that economics made desirable, too.

Poses and cutting: animation works on the principle that there is a hierarchy among drawings. Some are more important than others, because they define a particular movement. The most important drawings are calledposes, and an MGM booklet about "The Dot and the Line" (Jones' earlier, and much more successful, adaptation of another Norton Juster book) describes the role they play in a Jones cartoon:

" 'The Dot and the Line' began to take shape as a film when director Chuck Jones . . . drew nearly two hundred sketches as a preliminary story board.

"Over six hundred [poses] later, Jones was ready to time all of the action to the split second. . . . When Jones has timing established and [poses] to indicate the extreme action of each scene, the staff of animators and background painters go to work on all of the 'in-between' drawings."

That's not being fair to animators, who do a lot more than fill in the gaps between the director's drawings, but it is probably a fair approximation of how Jones has handled his cartoons. The animators work within the guidelines established by the director's poses and the animators' assistants then work within the boundaries established by the animators' "extremes"—the importance of the individual drawings varying with who has drawn them —director, animator, assistant or (lowest on the totem pole) "in-betweener," who fills in the frames necessary to complete an action smoothly. (At the Disney studio, there is another level, that of "breakdown man," between assistant animator and in-betweener, and at some studios the

to "PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH"

animator has only one assistant.)

The exact roles played by director and animator vary from studio to studio. Some directors do a lot of drawing (many of the most creative directors fall in this category), whereas other directors restrict themselves to timing and let their layout men do the poses. An animator may not reproduce a director's pose exactly if it doesn't fit in the flow of action—that is, if it doesn't work as one of his "extremes."

There are two basic approaches to poses: a director may want to emphasize the poses themselves, or he may want to emphasize the movement from one pose to another.

If a director wants to emphasize the poses, he can, first of all, draw poses that are strong and expressive. His poses should not suggest unresolved movement, but instead should reveal the characters' emotions. The director can hold his poses for a number of frames, perhaps varying the drawings slightly so that they don't seem frozen.

If a director wishes to emphasize movement, he does just the opposite, with poses that seem to strain at the leash, and are held only for some particular comic point, as when a character is frozen with fright for a few seconds.

In Jones' cartoons, the poses are most important; in the cartoons of other directors—Jack Kinney (director of the Disney Goofy sports cartoons) and Bob Clampett come first to mind—the movement from pose to pose is what makes the strongest impression. These differing approaches to animation produce cartoons with markedly different personalities: Jones' have an underlying serenity, Clampett's and Kinney's are full of restless energy. Jones' style lends itself to the exploration of a few ideas in considerable depth; in Kinney and Clampett cartoons, there is a continuous flow of ideas. (But there is nothing inevitable about this; Tex Avery's cartoons are distinguished by their strong poses, but they are much closer in spirit to Bob Clampett's wild, exuberant cartoons than they are to Jones'.)

There are many strong poses in Clampett and Kinney cartoons, and a plentiful supply of convincing movement in Jones' cartoons. It is simply a matter of emphasis. Choosing what to emphasize, and how to emphasize it, is in large measure what separates one cartoon director from another, especially at genre studios like Warner's. Both approaches to animation are equally valid, in the hands of good directors, because both rely on the tension between poses and movement. It is this tension that gives the best animation its buoyant, elastic quality—its life. When this tension is smoothed away, and the distinction between poses and movement becomes less apparent, as in a number of Disney and MGM cartoons, especially, since the late Thirties, animation becomes less interesting.

Jones' cutting emphasizes his poses. Although the cutting is quite rapid, it doesn't seem hurried, because of the stress on poses and not on movement in each shot. And, of course, most of the shots are one-character shots.

In the late Fifties, and then in the Sixties when Jones took over the revived MGM animation department, there was a gradual decline in his work, and disquieting suggestions of his earlier style. In "Zoom at the Top," for example, we are treated to a long shot in which the Coyote toys in the dust, evidently pondering ways to catch the Road Runner, then finally shrugs. The scene is leaden, a far cry from the cartoons in which the Coyote "shoots" (that is, with very few intervening drawings) into a pondering pose and works furiously at it (thanks mostly to his intense expression, and not to movement) before getting an idea. There is still more of this deliberate pacing in Jones' 1965 television special, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," but the Grinch's wonderful face is so expressive that Jones' efforts at subtle shifts actually come off.

The preciosity that destroyed some of Jones' earliest cartoons began to reappear in some of his late Warner cartoons, giving them a mincing, self-conscious quality. This shows up even in so excellent a cartoon as "What's Opera, Doc?" and dominates cartoons like "Bugs Bonnets," a dreary exposition of the notion that the hat one wears shapes one's personality.

Things got worse at MGM, where Jones was cut loose from the characters he had developed so lovingly over the years. He inherited Tom and Jerry from Hanna and Barbera, two directors with radically different temperaments. The whole point of the old Tom and Jerry cartoons was conflict—the cat and the mouse have no personalities to speak of—and Jones' obvious dissatisfaction with this formula, coupled with his inability to substitute anything better, robbed his Tom and Jerry cartoons of any vitality.

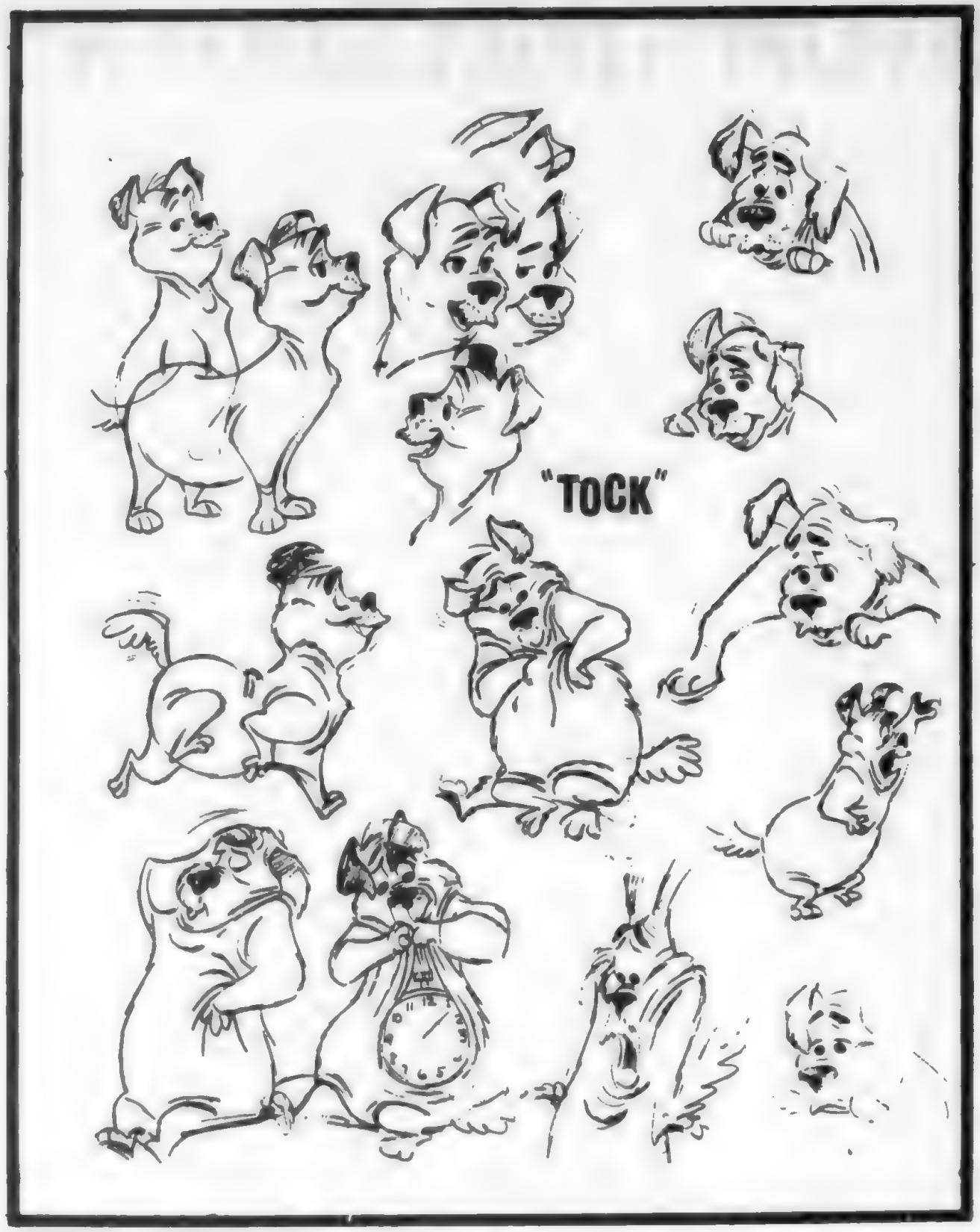
"The Phantom Tollbooth"—because it is so long, not because it is so bad—is a monument to the corruption of Jones' style over the last dozen years. It lacks any of the psychological precision that once distinguished Jones' cartoons, and in fact, the one outstanding sequence—the Washam-animated Doldrums—owes much of its success to the convincing **movement** of the Lethargians. They slither and ooze in a way that has probably never been captured in animation before.

Perhaps the problem has been that Jones has had less and less to do with the cartoons that bear his name. He is now more a producer than a director, and the two most recent cartoons that he produced—"Tollbooth" and the TV special "The Cat in the Hat" (made at the DePatie-Freleng studio and directed by Hawley Pratt)—have both been failures. "The Cat in the Hat" is the worst of all, an incredibly noisy, frenetic cartoon. Ben Washam, who was at Jones' right hand for many years, is the only one of Jones' stand-ins to have rivaled the master; he was the director of the highly satisfactory "Horton Hears a Who," shown on television last year.

The irony in all this (and Chuck Jones is a specialist in comic ironies, as witness the Road Runner cartoons) is that Jones is getting far more attention now, when his best work is behind him, than he ever did when he was making cartoons that have never been equalled. The intelligent things he has to say about television programs and current animation have made him a favorite of journalists who write about TV (although some of them have tried to dress him up in pointed shoes and pass him off as one of Santa's elves). Moreover, there is a didactic emphasis in what he says now that may explain why he was attracted to "The Phantom Tollbooth." He says things like this: "The ultimate in children's television programs is to get children to do other things than watch television." He has been director of children's programs for ABC television since early last year, and there is some question whether his attitudes will remain acceptable for very long in a network vice president. Jones told Cecil Smith of the Los Angeles TIMES last December, "I tell them [network executives] the solution is simple. Do good things. Ignore Saturday morning ratings. They just look at me. They don't know what to do with answers like that. They can't put it in a computer. It's too much for them."

"The Phantom Tollbooth" may be the coda to Chuck Jones' long career as an animation director. It would be sad if the career of the greatest director of them all were to end, not with a mighty chord, but with a piccolo's squeak.

—MIKE BARRIER



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THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH: The model sheet for Tock.

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plain his failure with so wordy a picture as "The Phantom Tollbooth." The film is crippled by what seems to be his fundamental mistrust of the book. Although he reproduces the book's plot and some of its dialogue, he tacks on new bits of action at intervals, as if fearful that his story can't hold the audience's attention. The action and the dialogue don't mix well, and the result is a cartoon that is both frantic and boring. Jones fails wholly to reproduce the tone of the book, which is sensible, decent and civilized.

Ironically, since the books are so dissimilar, Jones' "Tollbooth" has a great deal in common with Walt Disney's "Alice in Wonderland." Instead of trusting their material, both men fussed and fretted over it, and suffocated their films before they reached the screen.

The resemblance to Disney goes beyond this, since Jones' role in the production of "The Phantom Tollbooth" was similar to Disney's role at his studio. Jones was the "supervising director" for the picture, and Abe Levitow the "working director," which means that Jones prepared the story boards and then supervised everything that Levitow did; Levitow timed the picture and assigned scenes to the animators, and spent more time on the project than Jones did. Jones put together the story himself after three separate treatments of the book had been worked over by many other people.

Jones the story man did not serve Jones and Levitow the directors very well. The grinding crunch of dialogue colliding with action is heard early, when Milo encounters the Whetherman, a jabbering little fellow who is more interested in "whether there will be weather than what the weather will be." The whole scene is incredibly busy; the rush of movement gets tangled in the rush of words, and they diminish one another. Instead of demonstrating the Whetherman's confusion, the scene confuses the audience. To greater or lesser degree, this happens throughout the picture.

Jones' departures from the book are questionable in other respects. The nadir is Milo's climactic fight with the Demons of Ignorance (the chase that is the climax of the book could have been much more exciting in animation than Jones' substitute). Milo has been given a box full of ideas by King Azaz, and a "magic staff" (a pencil) by the Mathemagician. These aren't too important in the book, but in the movie, Milo draws a large "4" with his pencil, and fires the word "right" from it, like an arrow from a bow, downing the Two-faced Hypocrite with "forthright," and so on and on. The scene recalls the clash between the Prince and the dragon in "Sleeping Beauty" (one of the many echoes of Disney features in the film), and that is a pretty awful model. This vulgarization of Juster's book is especially astonishing coming from Jones, whose lapses in taste have been on the far side of vulgarity. He has been guilty of preciosity, but not coarseness.

Not all of Jones' additions are so unfortunate. The scene in the Doldrums is actually more effective in the movie than in the book—but here, significantly, the dialogue is largely surplus; it isn't essential to understanding what's going on. In fact, it's virtually unintelligible as spoken by the Lethargians, oozy, semi-transparent little creatures who slip and slur through their words. words. But the **sound** of their voices comes through clearly—it is slothful and vaguely menacing. Milo's car itself sags and "melts" as Milo heeds the Lethargians and refuses to think, but he is saved when Tock, the watchdog, pushes the car away as a wave of Lethargians surges after him. This touch of drama is not in the book, and the whole scene (most of it animated brilliantly by Ben Washam) has a balance and precision that the rest of the film lacks.

The movie has its other moments, and in one of them Jones uses words to good comic effect. When Milo and Tock arrive at Dictionopolis, they are met by a quartet of uniformed heralds, each of whom greets the travelers with a different—and fairly long—word of welcome, until the last herald—a round, tiny man whose head and body are indistinguishable—pops out from behind the others and says, "Hi!" As the first three heralds bow, each bends a little farther than the others, so that their torsoes form an arc.

This sort of verbal and visual elegance is rare in "The Phantom Tollbooth," which is almost as barnacled with "kitschy ingenuities" as "Yellow Submarine." As Milo and Tock ride in their car, Tock sings about time, and the screen is filled with clocks and the sun and the moon and even Dali watches. In Dictionopolis and Digitopolis, letters and numbers get similar workouts, to the accompaniment of similar songs.

What happens to King Azaz and the Mathemagician during all the razzle-dazzle in their cities is a clue to the movie's most serious flaw. There is nothing royal about the two rulers, who are rather imposing in the book. In Jones' hands, both are merely addled old men who are put through some comic paces. As a contrast, the king in Disney's "Cinderella" is both royal and funny—far funnier than Jones' kings, because he is a much richer personality. All of the characters in "The Phantom Tollbooth" are, like the two monarchs, mere shadows, and as a result, the movie is dead and buried long before Milo, Tock and the Humbug reach the Mountains of Ignorance. Somehow, as Jones shoehorns more action into Juster's story, character development is lost in the friction between the dialogue and the drawings.

The characters are pretty much zeroes in the book, too, but there is at least no confusion about what's going on, and there is the pleasure of Juster's facility with words. Juster's sketchiness actually provided Jones with an opportunity to pour life into such emply vessels as Tock and the Humbug, whose personalities could have been as strongly defined as those in Jones' Warner cartoons. But Jones failed to seize this opportunity, and only rarely are the characters depicted in any but the most general terms. There are flashes of personality: as Tock and Milo ride away from the Doldrums, Tock reacts with delight to the car ride, much as a real dog might; when Milo (who was animated mostly by Hal Ambro) mounts the podium of Chroma the Great, who conducts the heavens and regulates the sunrise and sunset, he is, perfectly, a small boy who is about to embark on an adventure both delightful and forbidden. But these are exceptions to the general blandness. Even the character designs are ordinary; the characters lack the wonderfully flexible faces and bodies that Jones bestowed on his Warner characters. Given the hopeless story and drab character designs, it is little wonder that most of the animation is smooth, professional and dull.

What went wrong? Bob Thomas, in THE ART OF ANIMATION, tells of the time when some of Walt Disney's story men argued that the scene in which Snow White wakes up and finds the Seven Dwarfs around her was too long. "Maybe it is," Thomas quotes Disney as replying. "But we've got to take the time to have her meet each dwarf individually, so the audience will get acquainted with them. Even if we bore the audience a little, they'll forget it later because they'll be interested in each individual dwarf."

Disney was almost always willing to sacrifice plot to personality, but Jones was evidently afraid to risk boring the audience (or perhaps himself) even a little. His characters—and thus his story—are never allowed to come to life, and "The Phantom Tollbooth" is a dry and hollow movie.

"The Phantom Tollbooth" could have been an excellent cartoon, and truly innovative, but only if Jones had chosen one of two basic approaches: he could have tailored the movie to the book, by treating the dialogue with genuine respect, or even better, he could have developed characters who embodied Juster's ideas, instead of stating them explicitly. What is depressing about "The Phantom Tollbooth" as it was actually made is that Jones and Levitow chose the easy way out, slighting the characters and trying to cover the void with visual gimcrackery. Unlike Milo and Tock, "The Phantom Tollbooth" fell into the clutches of the Demon of Compromise.

Fortunately, "The Aristocats" is a different breed of cat, although perhaps not for the reasons its director seems to think.

The Disney press releases about the movie have emphasized its new approach to production, which involves working out the story completely, down to the last detail, before beginning the animation of any of it.

Winston Hibler, the movie's co-producer, has described the old system this way: "In the old days, we had an idea of the story, and would work on the picture in sequences . . . and not necessarily from the beginning. And there were always several teams of animators and sequence directors working independently of each other. Walt would eventually pull everything together for the final film."

Wolfgang Reitherman, the director, has described the new system this way: "We are doing one thing a little differently this time. Instead of doing individual sequences, we're trying to maintain a strong continuity, forming stronger transitions, so that our story is like a heavy thread rather than links in a chain.

"The thing that has allowed us to begin working like this is that for the first time we have a clear idea of how our story progresses and where it's going to end up. We began production in the manner that we always have, working from one sequence to the next. But now we've been able to get a broader picture of the entire production and have to leave nothing to chance."

The cartoon itself is not consistent with its press releases. The story is poorly constructed, and in fact, "The Aristocats" seems to be looking over its shoulder at "One Hundred and One Dalmatians," which was reissued exactly one year before "The Aristocats" went into general release. In "Dalmatians," as in "The Aristocats," young animals —dalmatian puppies—are abducted and taken into the country, and must make their way back to the city. In an apparent effort to avoid comparison with "Dalmatians," Reitherman has bypassed opportunities to make the story more exciting. Edgar, the butler, is not really a very menacing figure (unlike Cruella de Vil in "Dalmatians") and the cats' journey back to Paris holds few of the perils of the dogs' return to London. Instead, the cats meet two English geese, who are funny enough in their own right, but are a dead end for the plot. The

THE ARISTOCATS: Scat Cat weighs Roquefort's fate.

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THE ARISTOCATS: Duchess with two of her kittens.

cats join the geese on their journey to Paris, and suddenly, there they are, back in the city, with no buildup to speak of.

The rhythm of the plot is jerky and uneven throughout the picture. The climax actually occurs about twenty minutes into the film, when Edgar, riding a motorcycle, has a wild, free-wheeling fight with two country dogs. The fight at the end between Edgar and half a dozen tomcats is puny by comparison, and it should have been the highlight of the film, like the wild chase that ends in the wreck of Cruella's car in "One Hundred and One Dalmatians."

The picture is full of annoying lapses. Roquefort, the mouse, is superfluous; the story could easily have been written to eliminate him entirely, but evidently the Disney men felt the need for some small, cute character like those in earlier features (significantly, "Dalmatians" didn't have one). Roquefort even looks a little like the early Mickey, with a sharp nose and button eyes.

When Roquefort is given a job to do, he only looks like more of a featherbedder. Roquefort learns of Edgar's kidnaping of the cats when he overhears the butler brag to Frou-Frou, the horse, about it—a cheap and easy way of solving a plot problem. When Roquefort tells O'Malley the alley cat that Edgar has captured Duchess and her kittens for a second time, O'Malley sends Roquefort to tell his friends, Scat Cat and his gang—but there's no indication earlier in the film that Roquefort has any idea who Scat Cat is, much less knows where to find him. The story men have handled "The Aristocats" clumsily, failing to find imaginative solutions (like the "twilight bark" in "Dalmatians") to plot problems.

Walt Disney's old method may have been expensive and cumbersome (one unfinished sequence involving a rhinoceros was dropped from "The Jungle Book" because Walt thought it was too violent and noisy to follow the highly active sequence with King Louie and the monkeys; a lot of finished animation was dropped from the monkey sequence itself because it was too long) but it benefited from his incomparable story sense. What was shown on the screen reflected none of the turmoil of production. Reitherman seems to have made the mistake of believing that what is best for him is best for the audience, and it doesn't always work that way.

But it's worth remembering that the stories of the Disney feature cartoons have been more and more in need of repair since the early 1950s, when Walt's interest began to turn decisively toward other things—live-action features, his amusement parks, television. Not since "Cinderella" has a Disney feature had the solid underpinnings that used to be taken for granted. "One Hundred and One Dalmatians" is an exception, and Walt supposedly didn't like it, because it didn't seem like a "Disney picture."

"The Aristocats" continues this new tradition of rickety stories; it is no more poorly put-together than "The Sword in the Stone" or "Sleeping Beauty" or "The Jungle Book." What makes it so much better than those cartoons is its characters, who extend an older, healthier Disney tradition, that of subordinating everything else, including the plot, to the characters. Even better, Reitherman has consciously abandoned the emphasis on human figures and "realistic" animation, returning to a richer, funnier style. He has been quoted as tying this in with the new approach to story: "With the story developed to a greater degree than ever before, it is possible to exercise better judgment as to which sequences can be animated somewhat loosely, without going into the detailed sculptured effect used almost to excess in 'Sleeping Beauty.' This more fluid animation, making the production more contemporary, was used somewhat in 'Jungle Book,' and will be employed more in 'Aristocats'."

That's a polite way of putting it. "Sleeping Beauty," which interrupted the steady increase in Disney Productions' profits over the last two decades, seems to have been the great traumatic event for the studio's animation department, revealing starkly the bankruptcy of the old "realistic" style, and bringing layoffs and budget cuts in its wake. The Disney people have been struggling manfully ever since to fight their way clear of that sinking hulk, and now they may be succeeding, thanks in no small measure to the use of Xeroxing in the preparation of the cels. That has helped cut costs a little, by eliminating an army of inkers, but, more important, it has encouraged what Reitherman calls "more fluid" animation, since the pencil sketches that are Xeroxed no longer have the high gloss of the old inked drawings. "One Hundred and One Dalmatians," although it was a departure for Disney in its story and its dialogue, was animated "realistically" in most respects—as the story dictated. "The Jungle Book," with its funny, cartoony characters, broke away from the old style, but not decisively, since the story and the characters were weaker than those of "The Aristocats."

Reitherman may be getting back to what Disney once did better than anyone: the convincing animation of the unreal. I talked about this in FUNNYWORLD No. 11, in my review of THE DISNEY VERSION:

"There has grown up in animation a false dichotomy between the 'realism' of the Disney fairy tales and highly stylized animation of the UPA type. But what distinguished the best Disney cartoons of the Thirties—and other good cartoons since—was their 'realistic' animation of the unreal. This is the great middle ground of animation—the 'plausible impossible,' as Disney called it, where impossible characters' impossible actions are made convincing through smooth and natural movement. This is the ground occupied by the great cartoons of Disney, Avery, Jones, Clampett and all the other superb craftsmen of the Thirties and Forties."

Reitherman seems to be trying to reoccupy this middle ground, although still rather tentatively. He uses his animal characters well. Most often, animal characters like Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse have been used simply as signals that new rules apply; their behavior has had only the most tenuous links with that of real animals. In other Disney cartoons, the animals have been

"real," with human characteristics grafted on. The characters in "The Aristocats" are different: in them, human and animal behavior are blended in a mixture that illuminates both. Margaret Lane, in her excellent biography, says that Beatrix Potter's drawings in, for example, SQUIRREL NUTKIN are "faithful to squirrel character but not to squirrel habit." At their best, the cats in "The Aristocats" meet this test, too —they have personalities that are familiar to anyone who has ever owned a cat, even though their behavior corresponds little to that of real cats.

This begins with the character designs, which probably owe the most to Ken Anderson's preliminary sketches (some examples of Anderson's animal caricatures are reproduced in an article in the fifth issue of THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF DISNEY). Anderson, who is officially in charge of "production design," is the first to go to work on an animated feature. "The Aristocats" was originally written as a two-part story for the Disney television series, but, according to a Disney press release, Walt shelved it because he thought that it would work better as a cartoon; Anderson then was assigned to explore the potential of "The Aristocats" while the "The Jungle Book" was still in production.

The character designs, like the characters themselves, are intriguing blends. Duchess' features are those of a lovely cat, but they have been built to move with expressions that are wholly feminine. This same harmony exists in O'Malley, who is bluff and male (and has, thanks to Phil Harris, the best voice in the picture), but is also, in the hands of Frank Thomas (who animated O'Malley's first scene), a cat down to his claws. Even though he first appears when the film is almost half over, O'Malley dominates it from the moment he makes his entrance, strutting and singing about himself. His movements as he approaches Duchess are pure cat, with a human fillip. He rolls on his back beside her as a cat might, but with a **conscious** insouciance that is unlike a cat's. His interest in Duchess is almost explicitly sexual, and it is not until later that "romance" takes over.

The three kittens are convincing both as kittens and as children (far more so as the latter than the children in the "Peanuts" cartoons), and provide some of the best moments in the film, as when Marie thanks O'Malley for agreeing to escort the four cats to Paris; her coyness is that of a little girl with a crush on a grownup. Even expendable little Roquefort's movements strongly suggest those of a real mouse.

Perhaps the best way to appreciate the Disney animators' accomplishment is to see "Gay Purr-ee," a 1962 animated feature about French cats that was directed by Abe Levitow and made for UPA by Chuck Jones' old Warner unit. As my wife pointed out to me when we saw the movie, its cats might just as well be horses; the cats in "The Aristocats" could be nothing but cats.

This excellence is concentrated in the first thirty minutes of the film, up through O'Malley's opening scene, while the characters' personalities are being established and the foundations of the plot laid. Unfortunately, not even O'Malley can save "The Aristocats" from sagging badly after that, as the infirmities of the plot become obvious.

The first half hour isn't perfect, of course, but its flaws are minor. What is disturbing about some of them—and about some of the shortcomings in the rest of the film, too—is that they suggest that the Disney animated features may be headed in the wrong direction.

There is Reitherman's emphasis on the voices, for example: "Since voices became more important with 'Jungle Book,' we again took great care in selecting people who would aid us in character development and identification, as well as give us a great reading."

What this means in practice is that most of the voices in "The Aristocats" are those of television performers. Most of them are good, but this may have been more by luck than by design. There is a virtual absence of French-accented voices, despite the French setting—Eva Gabor's is the only accented voice given any prominence, and, of course, her accent is not specifically French—but this works out well, since most of the voices speak in "basic American" and no strong accents grate against one another. Even the two country dogs—who speak in the rural accents of Pat Buttram and George Lindsey—don't seem too far out of place, since they speak only with one another.

But consider the next Disney feature cartoon, "Robin Hood," whose voices, in an English setting, will be as disparate as those of Peter Ustinov and Roger Miller. This absence of any unity in the voices is potentially damaging.

The French setting of "The Aristocats" is, despite Al Dempster's evocative background paintings, virtually ignored. The story could have taken place almost anywhere (which is not to say that it's "universal"). The dialogue is anachronistic in spots—O'Malley calls his friends "swingers," and even Madame Bonfamille's elderly attorney talks about "hep cats." The "hep cats" in question, a five-cat band led by Scat Cat, don't belong in this particular movie, since they are too little like real cats. The emphasis is on ethnic humor —one cat is Italian, one is Oriental, one is Russian, and Scat Cat himself —voice by "Scat Man" Crothers—is obviously intended to be a feline version of a Negro jazzman. (The temptation to make a "cat" a real cat must have been irresistible.) The band even includes a hippie cat—playing Dixieland, in Paris, in 1910. In their company, even O'Malley and Duchess become more like ordinary characters.

There's nothing wrong with anachronisms per se—no one who loves Tex Avery cartoons could say that—but they have to fit into the scheme of the picture, and the anachronisms in "The Aristocats" don't.

Audiences hay not be disturbed by these fumbles in "The Aristocats." but this carelessness—and that's what it is —could conceivably eat away at the Disney pictures. It is hard to imagine a Disney feature that emphasizes broad comic effects, and plays for laughs at the expense of plot and personality, but that is what could happen. A coarsening is already evident in the parts of "The Aristocats."

What is most disturbing, perhaps, is the evidence of slightly lower standards in the drawing and animation itself. At the very start of the cartoon, there is a shot of Madame Bonfamille's carriage, rolling through the Paris streets. The cycle animation is mechanical, not at all natural. (Ten years earlier, to get the movement of some of the vehicles in "Dalmatians" just right, the studio's special effects men constructed models of them; the models were painted white and outlined in black, then were filmed in action against a white background. Photostats were made from the film and the photostats were then Xeroxed.) For the opening minutes of "The Aristocats," many of the pencil drawings were left extremely rough for the Xeroxing, robbing several shots of their necessary elegance. Construction lines are even visible in Duchess' head at some points. This roughness—which is a far cry from "more fluid" animation —may even have been desired.

These are as yet only straws in the wind, and I may be making too much of them. The Disney studio remains the greatest reservoir of animation talent in the world, and it has moved recently to replenish itself by adding a number of talented young men to the animation staff, easing fears that the studio would drop animation when the fabled "Nine Old Men" (some of whom are already out of animation) retired. The Disney studio is, with the closing of Chuck Jones' MGM unit, and despite the occasionally excellent work by other animators, the last, best hope of animation. As "The Aristocats" demonstrates, Wolfgang Reitherman and his men are still capable of fulfilling that hope.

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BRIEFLY NOTED

BOOKS: Back in 1965, Jules Feiffer wrote a book called THE GREAT COMIC BOOK HEROES. It wasn't really a very good book, because most of its pages were taken up by reprints of early comic book stories about Batman, Superman, Green Lantern and others of their ilk—and most of those stories were just plain awful.

Don Thompson and Dick Lupoff, the editors of **ALL IN COLOR FOR A DIME** (Arlington House, $11.95) have, in their wisdom, spared us from that mistake. They reproduce comic book covers in color, but that's all. Instead, we see the old comic books through the eyes of a dozen writers. In many cases, the experience is considerably more pleasurable than reading the adventures of the Sub-Mariner or the Flash. There is in the best chapters in the book a striking mixture of affection and detachment—a gentle smile and a cutting edge.

An altogether different book is **JOHN FAWCETT'S WORKS OF ART COMICS** ($5.00 from John Fawcett, P. O. Box 37, Warrenville, Connecticut 06278). It is, in fact, the apotheosis of the fifty-two-page "funny animal" comic book (although the paper and printing are of the quality used in FUNNYWORLD). Two of Fawcett's drawings adorn the covers of this issue of FUNNYWORLD, and another heads the letters column, so imagine, if you will, a magazine the size of FUNNYWORLD filled to the brim with Fawcett's funny, quirky, nostalgic drawings, organized into a story about "Moose Mouse," the enormous mechanical reincarnation of a certain rodent with pie-cut eyes. It's even stranger and more wonderful than you might think.

Fawcett is a serious artist (he teaches at the University of Connecticut) whose work has been displayed in five one-man shows and as part of many group exhibitions. Appropriately, every copy of WORKS OF ART COMICS is signed and numbered.

ANIMATION: Fred Wolf's **"The Point,"** a made-for-television animated feature, was shown February 2 on the ABC network. In its nearly ninety minutes there is perhaps enough visual wit for one good sixty-second commercial. This is the latest example of the feature cartoon as homily ("Yellow Submarine" and "The Phantom Tollbooth" preceded it), but incredibly, for a film that makes so much of "having a point" even if one's head isn't pointed, the point, or moral, of the story is lost in the stale, confused writing. The cartoon has a dull-witted, inbred quality, as if made by men who have seen nothing but television commercials for years, and have talked to no one but advertising men.

COMIC BOOKS: The comic-book industry has been roiled this year by a controversy over the portrayal of drug addiction, even as its "relevant" comic books have brought the industry more attention than anything since the Batman craze. But comic book sales continue to decline. The reason is not hard to find. The Comics Code Authority has denied its seal of purity to THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN because of a drug-abuse subplot, but television is full of dramatic programs about narcotics—many of them presented at the behest of the White House, which last year asked TV producers to make a counter-attack against the "drug culture." As for the "relevant" comics, such as GREEN LANTERN, they are like middle-aged men in bellbottoms. Magazine writers and radio interviewers may mistake moral confusion for "relevance," but not many comic-book buyers have, evidently.

The truly relevant comics—that is, those worth reading—are published "underground." While some underground artists have used their freedom to air their psychoses (as in the appalling INSECT FEAR No. 2), the best have not, even when their stories have dealt almost entirely with subjects (sex, drugs, violence) banned or restricted in traditional comic books.

Now there is evidence that the underground comics are being used for broader purposes. There is **SLOW DEATH** No. 2 (Rip Off Press), for example, an ecology comic book (strange as that may sound) with roots deep in science fiction. Richard Corben's "How Howie Made It in the Real World" is an extraordinarily powerful story; in fact, it is its power, and not its sexual frankness (sex is incidental to Corben's story) that makes it "underground." The comic-book industry has become so brittle and short-sighted that strength—especially when clothed in a strange, blunt style like Corben's—is too difficult for it to deal with.

Another indication of this expanding range is Jim Mitchell's **SMILE** (Krupp Comic Works), perhaps the only underground comic book that is truly charming. But the firmest evidence is **HOME GROWN FUNNIES** (Krupp), the most recent work of Robert Crumb. A story called "Whiteman Meets Big Foot" takes up most of the book, and it's the best Crumb since "Fritz the No-good," in R. CRUMB's FRITZ THE CAT (Ballantine). What is different about the story is not its ideas—which are of the Rousseau-ish, "natural man" variety—but the way they are organized, and the seriousness with which Crumb presents them. Crumb is crazy if he really believes this stuff, but it's an inspired craziness, since he is uncannily sensitive to the trapped, desperate feelings of many ordinary people.

In the last year or so, only one "straight" comic book has appeared that is really worth the ten or fifteen minutes it takes to read it (not counting reprints like the Carl Barks stories in UNCLE SCROOGE). That comic is **O. G. WHIZ** No. 1 (Gold Key); there has been a second issue, but it's not by John Stanley, and it's not any good. Stanley is the cartoonist who made LITTLE LULU the great comic it was, and more recently, he has turned up working for first one publisher and then another—MELVIN MONSTER for Dell, CHOO CHOO CHARLIE for Gold Key—and vanishing between times to work (I suppose) for someone else, perhaps the Hollywood cartoon factories. No one seems to know much about Stanley, but his style—his writing as well as his art—is unmistakable, and he has rarely if ever been as brilliant as he is in O. G. WHIZ No. 1, which is about a little boy who becomes president of a floundering toy company and promptly reverses its fortunes. Stanley's finest work reminds me of the best Marx Brothers movies (minus the Irish tenors and romantic subplots), although the resemblance is only in atmosphere, not in the particulars. There is a constant toying with the language, and a delight in it (and in the **voice**—Stanley's characters yell more effectively than anyone else's in the comics) and there is, in his best moments, a piling on of gags and incidents—all growing out of one another, and following logically—that defies comparison with anyone except the Marxes and the best of the silent comedians. The gags tumble over one another, spilling out so rapidly that there's no time to catch your breath before the next one is upon you. The stories are so short that there's no time for this to get wearing. None of this is forced—there's no fumbling and straining for the next gag, as is so often the case in modern "screwball" comedy. Instead, there is a fine mind channeling and disciplining a bountiful comic imagination.

Last issue, some erroneous subscription information was given for Leonard Maltin's excellent **FILM FAN MONTHLY**. The price is 75 cents per copy; subscriptions are $5.00 a year by first class mail, $4.25 by third class, and $7.00 by air. I also neglected to mention, in my listing of back issues, FFM No. 89, which contains an article by Mark Kausler on the Tom and Jerry cartoons.

—MIKE BARRIER

PERSPECTIVES ON ANIMATION

BY MILTON GRAY

1. Pay TV and Video Cassettes: A New Golden Age of Animation?

A new Golden Age? What happened to the first one? The first Golden Age was over by 1950—not because there was no longer a market for good animated cartoons, but because there was no longer a market**place.**

Theater managers generally assume (falsely, I believe) that no matter how great a short subject may be, it will not attract people to their theaters. (Feature-length cartoons are, of course, a different matter.) When cartoons could no longer find a place on theater programs, they withered and died.

THE FIRST GOLDEN AGE

In the early days of the motion picture industry, most animated cartoons were crudely hacked out (as the majority of Saturday-morning television cartoons are today) and were regarded by movie audiences and theater managers alike as simply novelties and program fillers. There were some animators and producers in those days who wanted to improve their cartoons, but economic control of the medium remained primarily in the hands of uninterested businessmen. Finally, in the early 1930s, Walt Disney began to overcome the economic and technical obstacles and significantly improved the artistic standards of the cartoon film. By the late 1930s, Disney's films were so advanced, and so highly regarded by movie audiences, that the major studios, who supported the other cartoon producers, were faced with the choice of raising budgets and competing with Disney or losing their cartoon business. At the surviving cartoon studios, techniques improved, and then, when the artists (the animators, directors and storymen, particularly) had experimented for a few years, the artistic content improved. By 1940, a Golden Age of animation had begun.

Initially, there was enough money to pay for this kind of production, because most theaters were paying distributors about twenty-five dollars a week for each cartoon in their programs. (A few prestige theaters in large cities paid up to five hundred dollars a week.) But about the time the Golden Age got started, the double feature began to catch on, and the theaters rented fewer short subjects. The economic outlook for the cartoon darkened, until today, the small minority of theaters that do show cartoons seldom pay more than five dollars a week for them. Most studios' cartoon departments closed down, since the major studios (with the temporary exception of Paramount, but that's a story in itself) did not shift cartoon production from short subjects to features.

There was another factor in the decline of the cartoon. In 1946, the industry-wide animation union demanded and won a twenty-five per cent pay increase for everybody from the animators to the cel-painters. As a result, you can see a loss in production values in every studio's cartoons as of about 1947 or 1948 (cartoon short subjects in those days were in production for eight months or so). To the non-professional, this may seem to have been an unreasonable demand from the artists, but consider the circumstances: throughout the 1930s, the pay scale was so low that many **animators** were making less than the studio janitors who emptied their wastepaper baskets. Their pay improved a little when they formed a union (which took from about 1938 to 1941), and finally in 1946 they demanded the twenty-five per cent. Since then, with costs continually rising and returns from the theaters diminishing, things have gotten progressively worse. Commercial ("free") television, of course, has not been any solution and does not promise to be.

POTENTIAL FOR A NEW GOLDEN AGE

What are the chances for a new Golden Age? Even if there were now a market**place**, would the public pay to see good cartoons? During the last fifteen years, most people in animation, except those at the Disney studio, have become increasingly pessimistic. But I firmly believe that the public **would**—and I can cite examples to support my contention.

My favorite example is the Pink Panther. Back in 1963, at a time when there were practically **no** cartoons in the theaters, Blake Edwards hired the then newly formed TV-commercial cartoon studio, DePatie-Freleng (which was essentially Friz Freleng's unit from the old Warner studio), to make cartoon titles for his live-action feature, "The Pink Panther." When that movie was released, United Artists (the distributor) began receiving hundreds of telegrams from theater managers across the country, saying that they were getting calls from people wanting to know **exactly** what time the film started—because they wanted to see the **cartoon titles**. That created a demand—from theater managers, oddly—for Pink Panther cartoons. So DePatie-Freleng was paid to do one cartoon, "The Pink Phink," which won the Academy Award that year (1964) and was a big hit. That, in turn, got DePatie-Freleng a contract to do a series of Pink Panther cartoons.

Another example: in 1966, in association with ASIFA (a world-wide association of makers of animated films), Los Angeles County Museum of Art sponsored a public showing, in their seven-hundred-seat theater, of then-recent animated films from around the world (mostly from Europe, Canada and the United States). They scheduled seven performances, with the tickets priced at two dollars and fifty cents apiece—and the public **packed** the theater. The museum had to turn away hundreds of people. Since then, the museum has sponsored a three-week animation show each year, and every show has been a sellout.

On a number of occasions, I have gone to see a live-action feature and, just by chance, the program has included a great cartoon—for instance, an old Tex Avery from the Forties, or a Canadian Film Board classic, or a recent John Hubley—and in nearly every case the audience response was loudly enthusiastic, including applause at the end of the film. And these were **adult** audiences.

The question naturally arises: if good cartoons are so popular, why aren't there any theaters that schedule all-cartoon programs? It happens in Europe regularly, and I understand that the shows are usually successful, and play to adult audiences. But in America, it costs more than a thousand dollars a week to maintain even the smallest neighborhood theater, not counting film rentals, and theater managers seem extremely reluctant to book anything except the most popular features they can get.

This means that there is an eager audience ready to pay to see good cartoons, but with no place to go. If the theaters consistently refuse to play the films, how can the artists reach their potential audience? Last year, not one but **two** highly promising possibilities were announced: the federal government's approval of pay television and the technological breakthroughs that will lead to low-cost color home videotape players.

PAY TV

A widespread misconception, perpetuated by the theater owners, is that "pay TV" is essentially a plot to charge the public for commercial TV shows that they now receive for free. The truth, however, is that pay TV has nothing to do with commercial TV; it is only a **supplemental** program service—its purpose is to offer, for a price, programs that could not be supported by "free" TV budgets. For example: first-run theatrical motion pictures, uncut and uncensored (and uninterrupted by commercials), could be offered for a dollar and fifty cents (for the entire family—compare that to theater tickets). Pay TV is essentially a combination signal-descrambler and meter which, like the telephone, would be installed only on request, and would be connected to the subscriber's existing TV set. The subscriber would be billed **only** for the pay-TV shows that he chose to watch.

The loss to the movie theaters would probably be slight; most of the people who go to the theaters today are of high school and college age and want to get out of the house anyway. Pay TV is aimed at the stay-at-home audience, those people who feel that going to a theater is too inconvenient and expensive.

That stay-at-home audience is a big audience. If only twenty-five per cent of the fifty-eight million TV homes in America watched a popular feature, that would bring about fifteen million dollars to the film studio. Shorts could be thrown in with the features and receive a percentage of the take, or, more likely, there could be programs of just shorts.

Pay TV has fought a long, hard battle to win public acceptance, and small-scale experiments with it have failed repeatedly since 1951. I assume that the earlier experiments failed for the same reason the more recent experiments failed: none of the major studios were willing to release first-run films and risk a boycott by the theater owners. The theaters sponsored a nation-wide campaign to outlaw pay TV, and their hostility prevented pay TV from growing large enough to offer the studios a market rich enough to offset the risk of the theater owners' displeasure. Pay TV consistently won court battles but the pay-TV companies and the Federal Communications Commission were reluctant to act forcefully until such time as the United States Supreme Court made a decision. Then, in February 1970, the Court held, essentially, that pay TV is a legal business, subject to FCC regulation. In August 1970, the FCC announced its approval of the Zenith Phonevision pay-TV system for nation-wide use, and at this writing three applications have been filed for pay-TV licenses.

HOME VIDEO-TAPE CASSETTES

The potential of home video tapes as a market place for filmmakers is as great as that of pay TV. The tapes allow the viewer to see **what** he wants to see, **when** he wants to see it. An enormous number of movies—new and old, features and shorts—will soon be available for rental and for sale.

Feature movies on color video tape will rent for perhaps three dollars an evening, or sell for twenty dollars or so, depending, I suppose, on the popularity of the title. This is terrific news for would-be movie collectors, and movie sales on video tape are potentially big business. Already there are literally thousands of film collectors in the country, a significant number when you consider that the major studios do not now sell prints of their films, and film collectors must resort to an underground market where they can choose only from what little happens to be floating around. Some collectors eagerly pay as much as forty dollars for a 16 mm. color cartoon short or from three hundred dollars to as high as two thousand dollars for a 16 mm. color feature—and these films are often scratched, spliced, torn or otherwise damaged.

An advantage to filmmaker and public alike is that video tapes—unlike theaters, commercial TV and pay TV, all of which depend on large or centrally located audiences—can reach a widely scattered audience. It will be economically feasible to make and distribute low-budget, limited-interest films, like hobby films—or "underground" cartoon films that are the equivalents of today's underground comic books.

Since video tapes will be rented and sold for **private** viewing, censorship should be minimal. Granted that in recent years the old public taboos against sex in films have all but disappeared, but what about the new taboos, such as those against ethnic humor? The video tape, then, offers the filmmaker artistic freedom much greater than he has enjoyed in the past.

On November 14, 1970, the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences held a home-video-tape convention in Beverly Hills for its members only; I attended as the guest of Bob Clampett, one of the organizers of the event. All major video-tape companies except RCA sent representatives to discuss their latest plans and developments. Not all of the companies offered demonstrations of their video-tape players, but of those who did, Sony had easily the best picture. It was comparable to a cable-TV picture, and considerably superior to the average over-the-air broadcast picture.

There are now twenty-five million homes in America with color TV, and video-tape players will probably find their way into many of those homes. A lot of people will rent and buy old features and cartoons (remember the first Golden Age?), but I think that more will prefer to see new productions with more contemporary themes.

Although the impact of many movies is reduced on today's small screen, within the next five years, television screens will be as big as you like, up to six feet wide. The set itself will be only inches thick. Instead of the current five hundred and twenty-five scan-lines, these new sets will have two thousand and forty-eight scan-lines, which will give a picture as clear as that on a movie screen. The present cathode-ray picture tube, with its radiation and color smear, will be replaced by a "plasma-crystal" screen. Each dot on such a screen can be described as a sandwich formed of two glass plates, separated by a layer of liquid crystal material only one one-thousandth an inch thick. When an electric charge is applied, the crystal molecules grow bright—so bright that the picture can be viewed in direct daylight.

With a cable-TV and pay-TV hookup, the home viewer may not even have to drive to the store to buy a pre-recorded tape—he could call a central tape library and have a program transmitted into his recorder, onto a blank tape at a high speed—say, one minute per hour of program—and play it back later at normal speed.

The chances are good that the movie fan will truly have the equivalent of a miniature theater in his own home, and filmmakers will have an ideal market-**place** for any kind of film—including cartoons.

But one last point remains to be made. I personally feel that it was a matter of incredible luck that there was a first Golden Age of animation, considering how little animators, animation directors and storymen were paid. Indeed, many great talents, who were artistically attracted to the medium, either stayed away entirely or left to enter more rewarding fields. The few truly great talents who remained were those "cartoon freaks" who loved the medium so much that they were willing to work on low-budget films for a pittance.

Cartoon shorts, even in the Thirties and Forties, have never received a **proportionate** share of the box-office dollar. With pay TV and home video tapes, and with the public able to choose exactly what it wants to see, the short subject will, for the first time, have the opportunity to earn as much as features **—per screen minute.** I believe that the end of this old injustice will lead to a new golden era that will surpass anything we have seen before.

2. Cartoons, Computers And the Third Dimension.

There's been a lot of talk lately about computerized animation—talk generated primarily by the P.R. men for one animation-computer company, Computer Image Corporation—to the effect that computers are now turning out simple but artistically successful cartoons in full animation, and that fairly soon the computers will be so well developed that one animator with one computer will be able to produce in mere hours work that would normally take a major animation studio many months to complete.

An animation-computer, to oversimplify somewhat, is basically a combination of a television camera, a television monitor and a computer with a large memory bank. According to Computer Image, the television camera needs only to feed into the computer a single drawing or series of drawings, and then the animator can, by simply dialing several of the computer's control knobs, create full animation of the original drawing (or drawings) and see this finished animation on the television monitor. The computer will "remember" the entire sequence of animation, so that the animator can change anything that doesn't satisfy him. When he is finished, he can play back the entire sequence and have it recorded on video tape.

What do the Computer Image people mean by "full animation"—creative animation of characters who appear to live and breathe? Or merely a contorting image? Their publicity releases claim repeatedly that two years from now their computers will be capable of turning out feature-length animated cartoons equivalent to Disney's "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," in just a few months' production time. But so far this claim is totally unfounded. Computer animation's future appears to lie in a different direction.

I have made a conscientious effort to see as many computer-animated films from as many computer-animation companies as I could—which includes the most advanced films produced by Computer Image as of March 31—and the "animation" has **all** been of a **purely mechanical nature**: the images slide, wiggle, expand, contract, stretch, squash, twist out of shape, flop over, change from one image to another, and even (if given enough information) appear to turn in space as three-dimensional objects—and in any combination of these. Moreover, when the computer "turns" one of these "three-dimentional objects," it also eliminates the lines or the sections of lines that go "behind" the object—if the "object" is not supposed to be transparent. The same is true when one image goes "behind" another. But nothing is ever "animated" in the **living** sense of the word; nothing moves as if it had a life of its own.

In truly creative animation, the character or image changes continuously, not only in size and placement but in expression as well, and not only from "extreme" to "extreme" but usually right [illegible] to the last in-between. Theoretically, yes, it might eventually be possible to create this kind of change from frame to frame with a computer, but that would require at least as much time and effort as it would to simply draw each frame with a pencil.

The purely mechanical animation by the computer is impressive, however. One film I saw showed, in one continuous shot, a moving line drawing of an aircraft carrier as it would appear to a pilot flying down toward it and then landing on its deck. The carrier first appears far below and gradually rises up toward us, changing in perspective all the while. As we begin to "land" on the deck, we get a dramatic view of the foreground part of the carrier, and the parts of the carrier nearest us seem to move proportionately faster than the parts farther away—all with diminishing speed, until we stop, just as in real life.

If such computer animation were to be used in films in combination with hand-drawn animation, it could be a valuable tool, especially for moving backgrounds. (I am not referring to the common "pan" shot, in which a single background drawing is moved sideways.) An excellent example of a cartoon using elaborate moving backgrounds is Disney's 1935 short, "Three Orphan Kittens"; the camera actually seems to go around corners, under furniture, etc. But moving backgrounds are rare in animated cartoons because of the great amount of drawing and expense normally involved.

In addition to saving time and money, the animation-computer could make shots that would be practically impossible any other way. For example, the "traveling through space" type of shot: imagine a scene in which you begin far out in space, approach a distant galaxy as it slowly revolves, continue moving into the galaxy, past the millions of stars, and finally arrive at a particular star or planet. Disney attempted a similar effect in the opening scenes of the "Rite of Spring" segment in "Fantasia," using large models of a galaxy and trick photography, but the results might have been much more exciting if he could have used a good animation-computer. (I am referring here only to the stars, and not the hand-drawn animated fireballs, comets, etc., that were added to the scene.)

Before any animation-computer can be useful to theatrical filmmakers, it will have to incorporate a much finer standard of video recording than the five hundred and twenty-five-scanline system that is used commercially now. General Electric has already developed a two thousand and forty-eight-scanline TV camera, and Technicolor is "working on a two thousand-scanline system with picture definition so sharp that it may be transferred to 35 mm. or 70 mm. film via laser for common movie theater use," according to SHOW.

Recording on video tape, sometimes referred to as "electronic photography," has distinct advantages over traditional "light photography" on film. Video tape's "instant replay" is an obvious advantage, especially for live-action filmmakers, but a far greater technical advantage is its "traveling matte." (For the non-professional, the term "matte" refers to a type of trick photography whereby part of one picture is combined with part of another picture without seeming double-exposed. "Traveling matte" refers to mattes of moving objects in motion pictures. An example of this is the use of a cartoon character in a live-action scene.)

Matte work in film is difficult because it requires two complete sets of "masks" for each new exposure, and, because of the nature of light, black lines tend to appear around the areas matted in. Moreover, each time the film is re-exposed the whole picture becomes about five per cent lighter. But on video tape, when part of a new picture is to be matted into another picture already recorded, that part of the first picture that will be covered by the new picture is electronically erased to prevent double-exposure (although video tape can be double exposed if desired). Since recording an image on video tape is an electronic process, none of the light problems of film exist.

Animation-computers combined with sophisticated electronic technology should soon be able to eliminate the Xeroxing and painting of animation cells. It will be possible instead to feed the finished pencil-test animation (and the computer-animation) into the computer, with instructions as to exactly which colors are to be assigned to the animated character or image. The computer could then feed back the entire animation sequence **in color** to the television monitor and/or the video tape. And not only the areas between the lines but the lines themselves could be in different colors, as in Disney's cartoon features before Xerox.

In the years ahead there will undoubtedly be yet another use for the animation-computer: when the computer is combined with holography, it will be

(Continued on Page 54)

PART SEVEN OF THE

CARL BARKS BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY MIKE BARRIER

III. Gold Key Comic Books

A. WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES

264 (22/12)—September 1962—36

DONALD DUCK Master Wrecker—10—Donald is a fantastically skilled wrecker, destroying an old school building with his wrecking ball in such a way that it falls into neat stacks of lumber, bricks, pipes and blackboards. He demolishes an old fort by the sea, and an angry gnat whose home was in the fort lights on a wrecking order, making a "1" look like a "7" and Donald demolishes the plush Top Brass Club by mistake. (In the seventh panel of the fourth page, Barks includes a few bars of music; Matt Rosenblatt has pointed out that "The first seven notes are 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star'; the melody comes from a Haydn symphony. The last three notes are the ones that follow in the symphony, but not in ' Twinkle, twinkle, little star'." Barks, questioned about this, replied, "The music from Haydn's symphony must have been lifted from the book THE ART OF ENJOYING MUSIC by Sigmund Spaeth. I used the book for many references to musical forms and titles. Actually, I can't read a note." November 22, 1968 letter to Mike Barrier.)

265 (23/1)—October 1962—36

DONALD DUCK Raven Mad—10—Magica de Spell tries to steal Scrooge's first dime, which is on display at a bazaar, then hypnotizes a raven and has the bird steal it. The raven puts the dime on the tip of a sun-bound rocket so that it will melt and its powers be returned to Magica in the sun's rays, but Donald disguises himself as Magica and orders the raven to return the dime, which the bird does just before the rocket takes off.

266 (23/2)—November 1962—36

DONALD DUCK Stalwart Ranger—10—Donald, who is being tested to see if he is fit to be a forest ranger, is sent out to count the bighorn sheep at a water hole, but frightens the sheep away, first with the noise of a hi-fi and an air conditioner, then with the smell of his cooking, and finally with his snoring, when he falls asleep counting the sheep. He finally dresses as a sheep to lure the sheep out, and they chase him past the ranger station, impressing the rangers with his cleverness.

267 (23/3)—December 1962—36

DONALD DUCK Log Jockey—10—Donald takes his cousin Whitewater's place driving logs down the river when Whitewater's foot is injured by Black Pierre, a rival logger who wants to get his logs to the sawmill first. Donald reaches the sawmill first, but with Pierre's logs, since Pierre has switched them during the night. Pierre's gloating is cut short when he learns that Donald has made it down the perilous river with only two logs intact.

For an explanation of the purposes and procedures involved in the compilation of this bibliography, see FUNNYWORLD No. 12.

268 (23/4)—January 1963—36

DONALD DUCK Christmas Cheers—10—The nephews find huge gold nuggets on Scrooge's land and Scrooge buys Donald a truck and gives the city of Duckburg money to pave a rocky street so that the nuggets can be transported safely. A nugget is covered with dirt to conceal it, and when Donald's truck collides with a truck carrying a huge boulder to a rock crusher, the nugget and the boulder are switched, and the street is paved with gold.

269 (23/5)—February 1963—36

DONALD DUCK A Matter of Factory—10—Scrooge, embarrassed in front of his fellow billionaires because Donald is a nobody, makes him "president" of a motel. After some tribulations, Donald changes the name of the motel to "King's Inn," and with great fanfare (and Scrooge and his friends present) greets a "king"—Oscar, king of the hoboes. Donald winds up "president of scrap salvage" at one of Scrooge's factories. Art and editing. (Barks: "A heavily rewritten story from the office.")

270 (23/6)—March 1963—36

DONALD DUCK The Jinxed Jalopy Race—10—Donald, driving in a road race to fetch the mistletoe that will give him the right to kiss Daisy, queen of the Mistletoe Ball, is jinxed by Gladstone's luck and, arrested for litterbugging, sentenced to pick up all the trash along a stretch of the highway, Gladstone takes Daisy out to show her that Donald is "dallying" by the road, and when she tears up papers naming Donald "top duck" at the ball, she is arrested for littering, too.

271 (23/7)—April 1963—36

DONALD DUCK A Stone's Throw From Ghost Town—10—Donald buys a worthless ranch from a swindler, then sells it to another sucker. Donald, feeling guilty because he used the money to buy the "ranch" instead of taking the nephews on a vacation, gives the money to the nephews—and they buy the "ranch" from the man Donald swindled.

272 (23/8)—May 1963—36

DONALD DUCK Spare That Hair—10—Donald, who specializes in giving weird haircuts to weird people, gives a haircut and shave to an escaped gorilla, mistaking him for a circus roustabout. When Donald goes to the circus to collect his money, he is attacked by the angry circus manager, but Donald bests him by holding his scissors poised over the circus man's mustache.

273 (23/9)—June 1963—36

DONALD DUCK A Duck's-eye View of Europe—10—Donald, on a five-day tour of all the famous sights of Europe, falls ten seconds behind the rest of the party in Venice and endures all manner of trials as he tries—unsuccessfully—to catch up with it in Geneva. When he returns home, the gas man is ten seconds late coming to turn the ducks' gas back on, and Donald explodes.

274 (23/10)—July 1963—36

DONALD DUCK Gall of the Wild—10—Donald drives the nephews along the northern coasts, where he loses his wallet in a berry patch when attacked by a "bear" (the owner of the berry patch in disguise). The ducks try to find food on a beach, but are hounded by a game warden who forbids them from catching almost anything, until they find an oyster full of pearls. Art and editing. (Barks: "This was a nine-page office story that I stretched.")

275 (23/11)—August 1963—10

DONALD DUCK Zero Hero—10—Donald, tired of being a street cleaner, sails a ship north with a cargo of worms, perfume and candles to sell to the Eskimos. His plans go awry, but he returns with a boatload of reindeer butter, sailing his ship inside a iceberg to keep the butter cool—but he has to burn the butter to move the ice.

276 (23/12)—September 1963—36

Front cover (part): Donald, wearing a lifeguard's shirt, looks smug as two girl ducks stare dreamily at him. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Beach Boy—10—Donald, angry at the Woodchuck's official hound for showing him up as a lifeguard at a river beach, tries to distract the hound during his sentry duty, first with irresistible cooking odors and then by pretending to be drowning. Donald almost does drown and the Hound saves him, then forces Donald to cook for the entire Woodchuck troop.

277 (24/1)—October 1963—36

Front cover (part): Donald rides an elephant in a parade of strange pets. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK The Duckburg Pet Parade—10—Donald, searching for a unique pet to enter in the Duckburg pet parade, rents an elephant that Uncle Scrooge has just received as a gift from the rajah of Footsore. The elephant is a rogue, and routs all the other entrants in the parade—except for the nephews' mice, who frighten the elephant away and win the prize.

278 (24/2)—November 1963—36

Front cover (part): Donald, holding a toy ray gun, dances with Daisy. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Have Gun, Will Dance—10—The nephews receive a toy gun in the mail, as a premium for cereal box tops, that is actually an exact model of a top-secret Army ray gun—except that the toy gun only sets its victims to dancing uncontrollably. The nephews go blissfully on their way, unaware that they are causing all the dancing they see, then save a shipment of the **real** ray guns from being hijacked when they fire their toy at two Brutopian spies.

279 (24/3)—December 1963—36

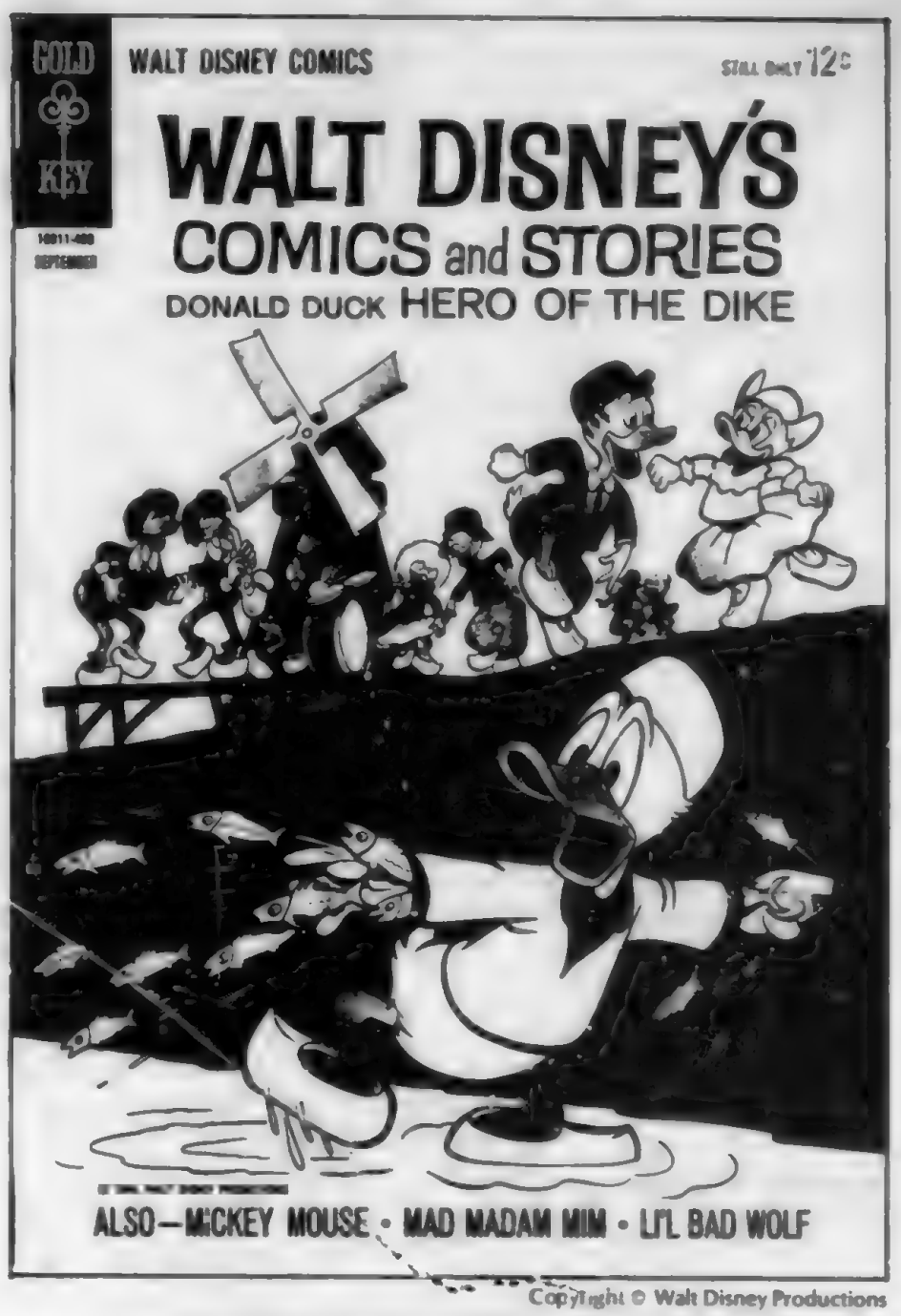
Front cover (part): Donald and the nephews throw balls at three cat-shaped pins at a carnival booth. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Once Upon a Carnival—10—Donald is running a crooked hit-the-bottles-with-a-ball game at a carnival, and when the nephews do finally knock down all three bottles, they find that their prize lamp is made of paper. A muscular contestant discovers Donald's trick, too, and in the course of the ensuing chase, Donald winds up in the mouth of a cannon that a clown is about to fire. The nephews save Donald by hitting the fuse with a ball, and he rewards them by returning the money they spent on his crooked game.

280 (24/4)—January 1964—36

Front cover (part): Donald is startled when he looks in a mirrow and sees a startled Scrooge as his reflection. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Double Masquerade—10—Donald, trying to avoid the members of his surfing club, and Scrooge, trying to avoid a troop of Junior Chickadees who are seeking a gift for their Christmas fund, disguise themselves as each other. Scrooge, mistaken for Donald, is forced to go surfing on a cold winter day, and Donald, mistaken for Scrooge, has to take the


GOLD KEY
WALT DISNEY COMICS
STILL ONLY 12¢
WALT DISNEY'S
COMICS and STORIES
DONALD DUCK HERO OF THE DIKE
ALSO—MICKEY MOUSE • MAD MADAM MIM • LI'L BAD WOLF

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From WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 288, September 1964.

Chickadees to Scrooge's private ski mountain, where he is caught in a stampede of bears. Each is puzzled the next day when he reads about the other's exploits.

281 (24/5)—February 1964—36

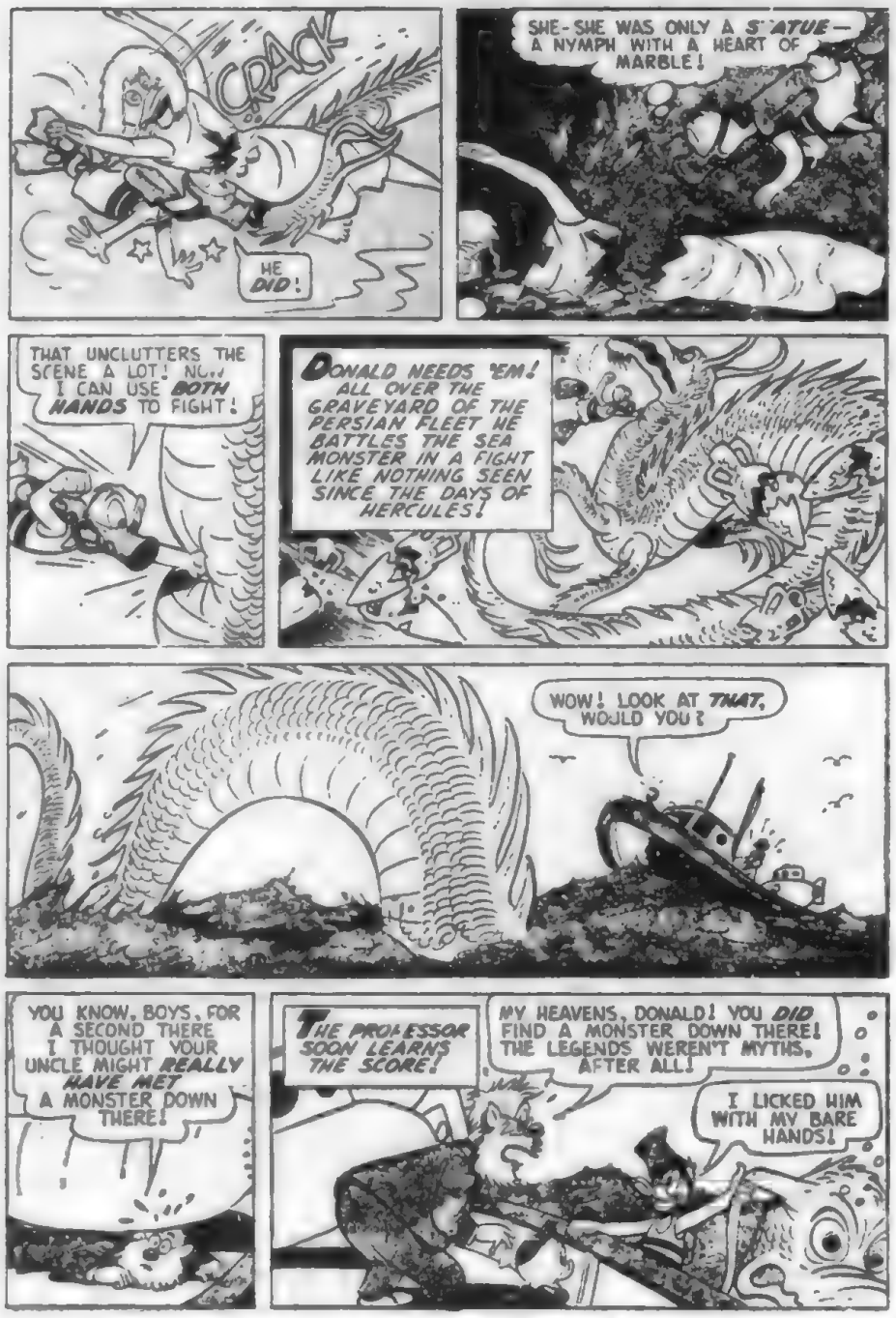
Front cover (part): As Donald prepares to hurl a snowball over a fence, a snowball with a lighted fuse comes sailing over the nephews' heads toward him. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Feud and Far Between—10—Donald's new neighbor outwits Donald's increasingly violent efforts to find out who the neighbor is, until Donald accidentally catapults himself through the neighbor's window and finds that he is none other than Mr. Jones. Resuming their old feud, Jones and Donald chase one another around a tree, snowballs in hand.

282 (24/6)—March 1964—36

Front cover: Donald, in a boxing ring, throws a haymaker as Boldan True and the nephews watch; the Beagle Boys flee as Madam Mim comes toward them with open arms. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Bubbleweight Champ—10—Two "burrows" of Junior Woodchucks are so closely matched in their physical fitness contest that their instructors must box to break the tie—but the Duckburg coach is ill, and so Donald—who has been doing nothing more strenuous than drinking Gurgleurp soda pop—must fight in his place, against Boldan True, a tiny muscleman who drinks nothing but yaks' milk. On the night of the fight, glasses of Donald's Gurgleurp and Boldan's yaks' milk are switched, and the "wild fulmination of man-made chemicals" hurtling through Boldan's veins sets him up for Donald's knockout punch.


CRACK
HE DID!
SHE-SHE WAS ONLY A STATUE— A NYMPH WITH A HEART OF MARBLE!
THAT UNCLUTTERS THE SCENE A LOT! NOW I CAN USE BOTH HANDS TO FIGHT!
DONALD NEEDS 'EM! ALL OVER THE GRAVEYARD OF THE PERSIAN FLEET HE BATTLES THE SEA MONSTER IN A FIGHT LIKE NOTHING SEEN SINCE THE DAYS OF HERCULES!
WOW! LOOK AT THAT, WOULD YOU?
YOU KNOW, BOYS, FOR A SECOND THERE I THOUGHT YOUR UNCLE MIGHT REALLY HAVE MET A MONSTER DOWN THERE!
THE PROFESSOR SOON LEARNS THE SCORE!
MY HEAVENS, DONALD! YOU DID FIND A MONSTER DOWN THERE! THE LEGENDS WEREN'T MYTHS, AFTER ALL!
I LICKED HIM WITH MY BARE HANDS!

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From WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 292, January 1965.

283 (24/7)—April 1964—36

Front cover (part): Donald and the nephews, on a broken spar, look at an exploding ship in the distance.

DONALD DUCK Captain Blight's Mystery Ship—10—The ducks are at the waterfront, and Donald ridicules the nephews for playing a game about being shanghaied. But then they see a sailor actually shanghaied, and when Donald and then the nephews go aboard to investigate, they fall through a trapdoor and are put to work by the gun-running ship's harsh crew. The ducks start a fire to attract the Navy's attention, but the crew leaves the ship full of explosives that are about to go off. The ducks extinguish all but one of the fuses, but when that gun fires, the Navy ship (from a Latin American nation) sinks the ship. After the ducks have returned home, Donald reacts to Gyro's invitation to join him fishing on the pier by hiding under his bed.

286 (24/10)—July 1964—36

DONALD DUCK The Olympian Torch Bearer—10—Donald wins the right to carry the Olympic torch through Duckburg when all the other athletes get indigestion from the parched corn they ate at the Olympic banquet. As he runs from Goosetown to Duckburg, Donald sets fire to almost everything in his path, finally blundering into a building with an automatic sprinkler system—which puts out his torch.

288 (24/12)—September 1964—36

Front cover: While Daisy and Gladstone and other ducks, all in Dutch dress, dance on a dike, Donald has his finger stuck in a hole in the dike.

DONALD DUCK Hero of the Dike—10—While Donald and Gladstone are racing along the Duckburg dike to Daisy's house to ask her to go to the Wooden Shoe Ball that is a highlight of the Sea Festival, they find a hole in the dike. Donald puts his finger in it while Gladstone goes to get help, but Gladstone goes hunting for Daisy and forgets Donald. Other people ignore Donald's plight, too, until he stuffs what he thinks is a stick into the hole—but the stick is an explosive that is to be used to blow up a symbolic "sea dragon," and when the mayor lights the fuse the dike is blown apart and Duckburg is inundated.

289 (25/1)—October 1964—36

Front cover (part): Donald is flipping a pancake when it is speared by an arrow (with string attached) fired by Mr. Jones.

DONALD DUCK Unfriendly Enemies—10—The nephews are awakened by Donald and Mr. Jones, who are hurling watermelons at one another. A series of slapstick gags follows as the two adversaries inflict damage in ingenious, ways, then the nephews try to persuade them to talk, first by means of a tin-can telephone and then through a pipe, and finally by having two parrots convey messages—but the parrots start fighting, too, and the nephews return to bed.

290 (25/2)—November 1964—36

Front cover: A football has just landed in Donald's soup, splattering him with it; the nephews, in football helmets, look in a window. (Art only.)

291 (25/3)—December 1964—36

Front cover: Donald is wearing a mask of his face on the back of his head and his coat is on backwards, and the nephews stand around him as if wondering which face is really Donald's. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Delivery Dilemma—10—Scrooge tracks Donald down with bloodhounds so that he can start training his nephew to take his place, starting with Scrooge's worldwide delivery service—but Scrooge immediately signs a contract to deliver "wild rabbit eggs" to a South Sea island, not noticing the fine print that says his fortune goes to the Beagle Boys if even one of the eggs is cracked. The ducks fight off the Beagle Boys repeatedly as they sail to the island. They trip and break the eggs as they present them to the island's king, but the eggs contain chickens, not rabbits, and the contract is void. (Art only.)

292 (25/4)—January 1965—36

Front cover: The nephews, dressed as pilgrims, flee from an angry turkey as Donald laughs. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK Instant Hercules—10—Donald is a master scuba diver, and he is given the job of finding an ancient Persian battle fleet, to discover what made ancient soldiers such fierce fighters. Donald recovers some amphorae, barely escaping a sea monster as he returns to the surface. Donald drinks some of an elixir in one of the amphorae and immediately becomes extremely strong. He defeats the monster with his bare hands—but the fight breaks all the other amphorae on the ocean floor and so the elixir is lost. Back home, Donald's self-confidence is gone, and he refuses any except the safest jobs.

293 (25/5)—February 1965—36

GRANDMA DUCK'S FARM FRIENDS and the Sheepish Cowboys—6 7/8—Reprinted from GRANDMA DUCK'S FARM FRIENDS, Four Color 1010, July-Sept. 1959.

294 (25/6)—March 1965—36

DONALD DUCK Duck Out of Luck—10—Gladstone is barred from an ice skating race because of his good luck, but enters as the "Masked Marvel," dressed all in black, and takes the lead, catching the first fish in the ice-fishing part of the race. The Junior Woodchucks' official hound releases cats from a nearby cat farm (since Donald has promised to donate his prize to the Woodchucks if he wins) and the cats eat Gladstone's fish. Gladstone hurls the fish bones against a painting he had tried to sell the judges earlier, and the bones stick, forming a

collage. Artists rave over the collage, and the judges buy it from Gladstone and give it to Donald as his prize.

295 (25/7)—April 1965—36

Front cover: Donald, as a logger, is high up a tree, which a woodpecker is pecking out from under him as Scrooge and the nephews watch. (Art only.)

296 (25/8)—May 1965—36

Front cover: Donald pulls a fish out of a top hat, while an angry rabbit rises from a fish bowl; Mickey Mouse, Goofy and Daisy, Donald's audience, all laugh. (Art only.)

297 (25/9)—June 1965—36

Front cover: Donald and the nephews are walking with a dachshund, and each of the nephews has a leash around some part of the dog's body. (Art only.)

GYRO GEARLOOSE—4—Reprinted from UNCLE SCROOGE No. 20, Dec.-Feb. 1958.

DONALD DUCK Monkey Business—10—Donald is an expert at tuning bells, and he solves a problem for Scrooge by finding that the clangorous tone of the cymbals of one million unsaleable mechanical monkeys is good for scaring away birds. The ducks sell the monkeys to the king of Siambodia so that they can be used to frighten the birds away from the country's rice paddies—and with a little alteration, the monkeys' cymbals rout an invading army, too. But the royal gong's tone attracts the birds back, and the ducks flee, pursued by Siambodians on elephants—but Donald alters the tone of the ducks' last set of cymbals, and the elephants are driven away. (Art only.)

298 (25/10)—July 1965—36

Front cover: Donald, who is vacuuming, looks annoyed as the nephews eat popcorn and ice cream as they ride on his vacuum cleaner. (Art only.)

DAISY DUCK'S DIARY The Double Date—5—reprinted from DAISY DUCK'S DIARY, Four Color 1055, Nov.-Jan. 1960.

299 (25/11)—August 1965—36

DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES No. 117, June 1950. (This is the first Donald Duck story since the first one in the series, in WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 31, April 1943, that is not the lead story in the magazine.)

300 (25/12)—September 1965—36

DONALD DUCK Now Showing—"Three Dirty Little Ducks"—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 43, April 1944.

301 (26/1)—October 1965—36

Front cover: The nephews, whose three fishing lines have become tangled with Donald's, pull him around under the boat and up on their side. (Art only.)

DAISY DUCK'S DIARY Too Much Help—4—Reprinted from DAISY DUCK'S DIARY Four Color 1150, Dec.-Feb. 1961.

DONALD DUCK This Month—The Mad Chemist—10—reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 44, April 1944.

302 (26/2)—November 1965—36

DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 47, August 1944.

303 (26/3)—December 1965—36

Front cover (part): Donald, who is wearing an Indian headdress and carrying a tomahawk, looks disgusted as a turkey snuggles up to him. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES No. 49, October 1944.

304 (26/4)—January 1966—36

Front cover: Donald is tangled in his Yo-Yo string, while the nephews easily manipulate as many as three at once. (Art only.)

DAISY DUCK'S DIARY Daringly Different—4½—Reprinted from DAISY DUCK'S DIARY Four Color 1150, Dec.-Feb. 1961.

DAISY DUCK False Flattery—½—Reprinted from DAISY DUCK'S DIARY Four Color 1150, Dec.-Feb. 1961.

DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 63, December 1945.

305 (26/5)—February 1966—36

GYRO GEARLOOSE—4—Reprinted from UNCLE SCROOGE No. 25, March-May 1959.

DONALD DUCK—9½—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 70, July 1946. (The original story is ten pages; in the reprint, panels 5 and 6 on page 9 and panels 1 and 2 on page 10 have been deleted to allow room for a circulation statement.)

306 (26/6)—March 1966—36

Front cover: Donald walks away with a satisfied look from the nephews' metal triple bunk bed, which he has connected with the water pipe so the nephews can get themselves drinks of water from faucets by their pillows. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES No. 94, July 1948.

307 (26/7)—April 1966—36

Front cover: Donald is ready with a fly swatter as a nephew's toy plane approaches the easy chair where he is reading. (Art only.)

DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES No. 91, April 1948.

308 (26/8)—May 1966—36

DONALD AND DAISY The Beauty Business—10—Daisy and the nephews follow Donald and find that he is secretly attend-

YOU-YOU—SO THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE STUDYING IN TRADE SCHOOL!
I KNEW YOU'D DO A PERMANENT RAVE, DAISY! THAT IS WHY I KEPT SILENT!
WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE LEARNED SOME GLAMOROUS OCCUPATION?
I HAVE! THINK OF PERRE OF THE RITZ, AND FRANCOIS OF THE PLAZA! THEY'RE GLAMOROUS GUYS!
THEY'RE OILY WOLVES WHO PINCH GIRLS' CHEEKS! (SOB! SOB!)
QUIET, DAISY, HERE COMES MY FIRST CUSTOMER!
YE CATS! OUR UNCA DONALD'S A PIN-AND-CURL MECHANIC!
HE WON'T BE FOR LONG! LOOK AT WHO HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO BEAUTIFY!
MRS. J. CROWSFOOT DRYSKIN OF TURKEYNECK-ON-THE-MOHAWK, THE BANE OF THE BEAUTY BUSINESS!
BEAUTICIANS ALWAYS RUIN MY LOOKS, AND I'M WARNING YOU, BUSTER—I RUIN BEAUTICIANS!
WHAT WOULD MA-DOM LIKE TODAY? ... A FACIAL PERHAPS?
DON'T HAND ME A SNOW JOB, BUSTER! WHAT DOES THIS FACE LOOK LIKE IT NEEDS?
THE WORKS! GET GOIN' ON IT!

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From WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 308, May 1966.

ing night classes at a trade school; then a beauty shop opens with Donald as the beautician. Daisy is angry with Donald, but he proves to be a master beautician, and soon every girl in town—except Daisy—has been to his shop. Daisy's nieces finally drag her to Donald, but they mix up Donald's jars so that Daisy's face is ruined. The nieces lock Donald in a cabinet and work on her themselves, after she faints, and the results are so good that Donald closes his shop to take her to dinner.

309 (26/9)—June 1966—36
Front cover: Donald and Daisy ride together on a skateboard, using an open umbrella as a sail. (Art only.)

310 (26/10)—July 1966—36
Front cover (part): Donald looks on in astonishment as Daisy lifts a barbell with one finger. (Art only.)

312 (26/12)—September 1966—36
DONALD AND DAISY The Not-so-ancient Mariner—10—Donald, after learning that Daisy and Gladstone have both won free cruises to the South Seas, memorizes sea poetry and wins a cruise himself—but he is riding in the freight hatch while Daisy and Gladstone ride in the first class section. Donald makes his way to first class in a potato sack, but is pursued by a steward and covers his face in Daisy's wig. He accidentally shoots down a passing albatross with a rubber tipped arrow, and the albatross returns to life as it and Donald are being carried through the ship's galley. Donald falls into a vat of dough and is thrown overboard by the ship's cook, who mistakes him for the albatross. The ship has to turn around to pick Donald up, and so Donald's low guess in the ship's mileage pool is correct—and Donald wins enough to pay for first-class passage.

313 (27/1)—October 1966—36
Front cover: Donald plays a tune with drumsticks on the nephews' World War I-style helmets. (Art only.)

314 (27/2)—November 1966—36
Front cover: The nephews' toy rocket lands in a cake Daisy is holding, splattering it on Donald. (Art only.)

315 (27/3)—December 1966—36
Front cover: Donald, who is carrying a book called SPOOKY STORIES, is frightened when the nephews shake a coat with stick "arms" on a coat rack. (Art only.)

316 (27/4)—January 1967—36
Front cover: Daisy and a dalmatian both look annoyed as they pass one another, because their coats are identical; Donald and a nephew laugh. (Art only.)

319 (27/7)—April 1967—36
Front cover: Donald looks nervous as the nephews, wearing deerstalkers, apply fingerprint powder to their piggy bank. (Art only.)

321 (27/9)—June 1967—36
Front cover: The nephews are in the poses of the see-hear-speak-no-evil monkeys as Donald, who is reading a comic book, approaches an open manhole. (Art only.)

322 (27/10)—July 1967—36
Front cover: Donald and the nephews are seated on a horse whose tail has just been cut off by Daisy, who is wearing it as a ponytail. (Art only.)

324 (27/12)—September 1967—36
Front cover: The nephews are toasting hot dogs in the rain, and the smoke from the fire is building up around Donald's head as he holds the umbrella. (Art only.)

326 (28/2)—November 1967—36
Front cover: The nephews have just launched a toy rocket whose vapor trail leads into a house from which Donald has just emerged with smoking tail feathers and an angry look on his face. (Art only.)

328 (28/4)—January 1968—36
Front cover: Donald, with only one ski, scowls as the nephews ride away on his other ski as if it were a sled. (Art only.)
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 148, January 1953.

329 (28/5)—February 1968—36
Front cover: The nephews have run a hose up through a snowman, and water squirts from the snowman's "mouth" and hits Donald in the back of the head. (Art only.)

331 (28/7)—April 1968—36
Front cover: As Donald watches, two of the nephews jump down from a brick wall toward one end of a springboard; on the other end of the board, the third nephew is in a tiny rocket marked "Moon or Bust." (Art only.)

332 (28/8)—May 1968—36
Front cover: As Donald peers around a corner anxiously, the nephews wait poised with bow and arrow, popgun and slingshot in front of a cuckoo clock. (Art only.)

334 (28/10)—July 1968—36
Front cover: The nephews are using a fish bowl to blow soap bubbles, and Donald looks astonished as a fish floats by in a bubble. (Art only.)

335 (28/11)—August 1968—36
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES No. 129, June 1951. (The panels on the first page have been trimmed in depth to make room for the indicia at the bottom of the page. Except as noted, the same is true of the following Barks reprints in WALT DISNEY'S.)

341 (29/5)—February 1969—36
Front cover: The nephews peek out from behind a snowman whose outstretched arm seems to indicate that he threw the snowball that has just hit Donald on the head. (Art only.)

342 (29/5)—March 1969—36
Front cover: Donald laughs as popcorn pops out from under Daisy's portable hair-dryer and the nephews catch it in a bowl. (Art only.)
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 131, August 1951.

343 (29/7)—April 1969—36
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 144, September 1952.

344 (29/8)—May 1969—36
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 127, April 1951.

345 (29/9)—June 1969—36
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 139, April 1952.

346 (29/10)—July 1969—36
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 140, May 1952.

347 (29/11)—August 1969—36
DONALD DUCK—10—Reprinted from WALT DISNEY'S COMICS No. 141, June 1952.

(Continued next issue.)

FEARLESS FANG

BY MIKE BARRIER

PART THREE OF THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES OF THE HEIR TO HAMSTER HALL. HE HAS JUST MET THE HALL'S HOUSEKEEPER.

MISS WREN, IT WAS BY A HAPPY CHANCE THAT OUR PATHS CROSSED.

OH YES, MR. FANG, YES INDEED.

PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR CARRYING ON SO... BUT YOU REMIND ME SO MUCH OF YOUR DEAR UNCLE, VANISHED NOW THESE SEVEN YEARS.

AH YES, I UNDERSTAND

TELL ME, HOW DID YOU PROVIDE FOR YOURSELF ALL THIS TIME?

WALK

IT WAS HARD, SIR, BUT I HELD MYSELF TOGETHER BY SELLING COSMETIC KITS TO THE LADIES.

COSMETICS?

YES SIR, "OIL OF THE SNAKE" COSMETICS, AND A BLESSING THEY HAVE BEEN TO MANY A WOMAN.

BUS STOP

THEY SLITHER DOWN INTO THE PORES AND GRAB THE DIRT AND WRESTLE WITH IT AND THROW IT OUT... IT'S WONDERFUL TO SEE.

DEAR LADY, I SHOULD THINK THAT SUCH A TITANIC STRUGGLE WOULD LEAVE ONE'S SKIN LOOKING LIKE BERLIN, AFTER THE WAR.

NO SIR, NOT IF YOU READ THE LABEL.

BUS STOP

MEANWHILE...

TWO HOURS—THAT GUY TOSSING 'EM DOWN AND TALKING ABOUT KILLING HIPPIES, AND YOU SIT THERE LIKE A ROCK, NURSING ONE LOUSY BEER. HOW COME?

HE WAS SITTING ON HIS NEWSPAPER.

WHY DIDN'T YOU BUY A PAPER?
BECAUSE THEN I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD ENOUGH TO PAY FOR A BEER.

OH, THE HELP WANTED SECTION. NOW I GET IT.
YEAH.

WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?
NOT WORK... A JOB.

MAYBE A JOB THAT INVOLVES LOTS OF EATING AND SLEEPING... I'M GOOD AT THAT. MAYBE I COULD BE A BODYGUARD FOR SOMEONE WITHOUT ANY ENEMIES.
WITH THOSE QUALIFICATIONS, YOU COULD BE SOME GUY'S...

MISS WREN, DID MY UNCLE HAVE A MANSERVANT?
UNH? NO SIR, HE SAID PAYING ME WAS THROWING AWAY ENOUGH MONEY.

WELL! I THINK THE LORD OF HAMSTER HALL SHOULD HAVE A VALET. SOMEONE TO BRING HIM THE PAPER IN THE MORNING, PROTECT HIM FROM INTRUDERS...

...TO GREET HIM WARMLY WHEN HE RETURNS HOME IN THE EVENING, TO...
MERCY, MR. FANG, YOU DON'T WANT A VALET, YOU WANT A FAITHFUL DOG.

WOOF.
MORE TO COME

From MILTON GRAY: I thoroughly enjoyed reading your review of "Yellow Submarine," including your thoughts on animation generally, probably because I found myself in nearly complete agreement with everything that you said. So I won't elaborate on what I agreed with, but rather on the few things that I disagreed with. My biggest disagreement concerns the paragraph that discusses John Hubley. Actually, I was happy to read it because, of all the reviews of Hubley I've ever seen, this was the first that described him as less than an infallible god among makers of animated films, and as you know I am not a great Hubley fan. However, I think there are some things that can be said about his films and some things that can't: for instance, I would be (and I expect you also would be) pretty hard pressed to find a Hubley cartoon in which the characters had no faces. And I'm wondering if you were implying something derogatory in your phrase, "animator's little tricks"—if so, I wish you hadn't chosen "Moonbird" to illustrate that phrase, as "Moonbird" seems to be widely regarded (and I also regard it) as one of Hubley's best films. In fact, it was animated primarily by Bobe Cannon, who is widely recognized as one of Hollywood's greatest animators, and he wasn't faking in his animation in "Moonbird."

In another part of the review, I don't fully agree with your observation that "Hanna and Barbera's Tom and Jerry cartoons are over-animated; there's lots of superfluous movement." I probably would have agreed up until about six months ago, but since then I have carefully studied (with Mark Kausler) about thirty Tom and Jerry rental films, and I must say that there is an amazing subtlety in much of that animation. I feel that the fault lies not with the animation itself, but with the possibility that the directors were attempting to tell screwball stories in realistic terms—"realistic" in the sense of a late-Thirties Disney feature. For me, the Hanna and Barbera Tom and Jerrys would work much better if the **drawing** style (of the characters **and** the backgrounds) were more abstract and exaggerated—like the Avery and Clampett theatricals.

Something I've never quite been able to believe is that Bob McKimson drew the 1943 Clampett Bugs Bunny model sheet. Not to discredit Bob, but the style of drawing looks more like that of his brother, Tom McKimson.

In regard to the Clampett interview, it's surprising to me how many people under thirty-five, even in the animation industry, have never heard of Clampett, except for his "Time for Beany" TV show. In the last few months I've shown some Clampett Warner cartoons to about thirty such people and they have all expressed amazement at the artistry in the films—some have even said, "I've never seen anything like that before" (in a tone of voice suggesting admiration). This suggests to me, sadly, just how much of the Golden Age of animation has already been forgotten.

I plead guilty to imprecise language in discussing both the Hubley and Hanna and Barbera cartoons; my criticisms were meant to be of the directors, not the animators. I was also wrong, of course, in saying that some Hubley characters have no faces. In trying to track down just how this idea got stuck in my mind, I decided that I must have been thinking of a television commercial—one that was not even made by Hubley, but by Murakami-Wolf.

Bob Clampett and the McKimson brothers all agree that Bob McKimson drew the Bugs Bunny model sheet (reproduced on Page 31 of FUNNYWORLD No. 12).

From GERALD WEALES: The only thing that bothered me was the priggishness of your aesthetics. I have no desire to defend "Yellow Submarine" or "Moonbird," neither of which I have seen, but it strikes me as damned pushy on your part to decide that people who enjoy them are only being snobbish while the things that you enjoy (some of which bore me silly) are indications of true enjoyment. Vigorous opinions are necessary to keep a magazine alive, but it seems to me that you could attack a film without doubting the motives of its defenders.

The thrust of my attack on "Moonbird" and "Yellow Submarine" was against the cartoons themselves, and the appeals to snobbery they contain. This is not to say--and I did not say—that everyone who enjoys those films is a snob. I have friends who have found great visual beauty in both, and even profundity, in the Hubley cartoon. I simply believe that they're seeing what's not there (although Hubley's cartoons are certainly well animated). I have no reason to attack their motives, and in fact, I'm confident that time and a second look will dim their earlier enthusiasm. On the other hand, I have no doubt that many people respond to John Hubley's films the way that he (consciously or unconsciously) wanted them to respond. That is, by congratulating themselves, and Hubley, on their sensitivity and keenness of perception, and other admirable qualities. I think this sort of feedback is important. Hubley's cartoons, and the UPA cartoons before them, have helped to foster attitudes and beliefs among both audiences and other cartoon makers that have determined in large part the kinds of cartoons we've been seeing for the last twenty years or so. I believe they have helped turn self-confident cartoon makers into apologetic hacks, and hacks into posturing "artists."

From JUNE FORAY: Congratulations! A "cutesie-pie" amateur has succeeded in writing the first pejorative review of my career; however, the insouciance of your entire magazine to Walt Kelly with his "soul brother liberals and small college intellectuals" would seem to prevent a less than apocryphal or acerbic critique by even Maggie Thompson, an admitted undergraduate in college but perhaps a graduate magna cum laude in "Nancy" and "Little Orphan Annie." Leapin' lizards! My being the sole liability of a film, which was the communal effort of writers, directors, animators, actors,

singers, musicians, engineers, lab technicians, in-betweeners, inkers and painters, checkers and an advertising agency and network, appears to be a monumentally herculean task for anyone who had even only one master. Fortunately, Mrs. Thompson has only her Lit professor and an amateur magazine to answer to with not even a penny of union scale changing hands.

As with the night, television has a thousand eyes, and entertainment is in the eyes of the beholder, to paraphrase a couple of latter-day philosophers. Thus was my febrile distress ameliorated by the fact that Mrs. Thompson admitted that her college freshman roommate and a couple of eight-year-old boys were enchanted by "The Pogo Special Birthday Special." Where has the twelve-year-old viewer mind gone? Huzzah! We have widened the spectrum, but isn't that what television is all about? And as for the eight-year-old boys—I always did like younger men.

Although Maggie Thompson is a young woman, it has been a number of years since she graduated from college.

From ALEX EISENSTEIN: Steve Eng's commentary on the Barks ducks in FUNNYWORLD No. 10 disturbs me somewhat. He examines all aspects of the social consciousness expressed in the stories, but little else. He views the ducks' characterizations only insofar as they variously embody politico-moral precepts. In discussing the contradictions that are Donald, I think he fails to realize that Donald's character often changes substantially from one story to another, where the stories differ in scope. The Donald associated with Scrooge's adventures seems to me generally a rather different creature from the one who courts Daisy or precipitates altercations with his three nephews. There is much less of Donald's stereotype volatile temper, is there not, in the stories of high adventure (or plunder, if you prefer) with Scrooge? Eng ignores any indication that Barks ever manipulates the attributes of the players in his little dramas to accommodate the plots.

Eng also fails to mention what for me were the most telling signs of character exhibited by the ducks—the minor, even trivial lines of dialogue that appear, again and again, without fulfilling or contributing to either the humor of the script or its necessities of plot—spontaneous remarks that are neither over-cute nor out of place; dialogue that **needn't be there** for any functional reason other than to flesh out the psychological presence of the character uttering it. And always these lines seem very natural, never obtrusive.

Last, but **hardly** least—Eng totally neglects the staple of the stories, their humor. **This** is where the stories attain their greatest literary merit (aside from matters of superior characterization, which is not, after all, the **raison d'etre),** for they are **truly** comic adventures. This comedy is their reason for being, not any peripheral social comment/realism/conscience/awareness—or lack thereof. I'd prefer discussion of the particular qualities of Carl Barks' humor to the former sort of analysis, not to mention some investigation into the nuances of Barks' visual renditions of the Disney characters (another vital area neglected by Eng). Even a cursory comparison of the Barks art to that which replaced it (except for reprints) in the more recent editions of the duck comic books reveals the former works as superior in every way—the Barks grasp of line, form, balance, texture, composition and design is well beyond that of the artist who draws the new stories.

Curious to say, I found Eng's reply to Maggie Thompson in FUNNYWORLD No. 11 more cogent that Maggie's rebuttal of some of his less tenable views. I think it is perhaps because Maggie misses the boat, too, in "explaining" the pervasive philosophy of Barks in and through his duck comics. Actually, I think I disagree pretty much equally with both of them; I **do** find points in both to agree with, also, but they both suffer from an overwhelming desire to prove that a comic book is something **more** than a comic book, and on a philosophical level yet! The stories are perfectly beautiful as literary/ artistic works within their set framework (and let's be honest in that, no matter what Barks did with the ducks, the framework remained fairly rigid); I feel no need to establish or deny them status as, say, **sagas** (i.e., in the case of UNCLE SCROOGE) to determine and fix their absolute or **relative** literary merit. I mean, why can't a Donald Duck or Scrooge comic be appreciated for what it is, for its high-level fulfillment of the intrinsic possible delights of the medium, rather than being compared with novels or epics or what have you? This really galls me, especially as for **years** before I heard of even science-fiction fandom, I had considered the duck comics (and especially those tales in UNCLE SCROOGE) possessed of distinct literary qualities beyond the pale of the average comparable comic book. At an age when I was still reading and enjoying SUPERMAN and BATMAN, basically for their overpowering element of wish-fulfillment, I had begun to read the ducks in a much different way—for their greater literary appeal. Nevertheless, some people have carried that particular bandwagon a bit too far (and I **do** mean carried); the duck stories, many of them, are high-quality examples of the "funny animal" comic, skillfully wrought of many of the elements of more mundane forms of literary art, but they are not novels or epics or sagas, nor are they comparable to those much more ambitious forms, and I see no reason to be unhappy or embarrrassed over the fact. Those who claim otherwise, at great length and depth, are deceiving themselves.

Bill Spicer, **et al.**, on the other hand, tend toward the opposite extreme in the recent historical surveys appearing in GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE, which explore early examples of the comic strip that have no obvious literary merit and precious little beyond their historical precedence in the area of graphic presentation; nevertheless, Bill seems to believe they are artistically significant. Perhaps this is a matter of clashing tastes between Bill and me, but I feel he's trying to justify the worth of comic art via the ploy of ancient lineage assiduously delineated; whereas Maggie and Steve are working the other side of the street, attempting to legitimize the comics by identifying them as unrecognized variants on the established literary forms, and endowed with **all** the consonant aesthetic values, held dear by the academic and journalistic literati of the present day.

(Continued from Page 45)

possible to make cartoons that are literally three-dimensional.

The holographic process does not simply record light intensity, as does standard photography—it records **light wave lengths**. These light wave lengths are re-created when a laser beam is directed through a hologram, and the eye interprets these different wave lengths as a single three-dimensional image in space. Holography can already record full color, and a hologram can be made on movie film.

Experiments in making artificial holograms from two-dimensional pictures have been moderately successful. In my opinion, this would be preferable to making real holograms from multiplane cartoon setups, because the multiplane setup in holography would look like what it is—flat drawings on different receding planes—whereas with an artificial hologram the computer could control the amount of artificial depth of every part of the picture, literally dot by dot.

One has to see a demonstration of holography, as I have, to fully appreciate its exciting artistic potential: it will permit animators to caricature real depth as well as size and shape.

The computer is not likely to replace the animator or even the assistant animator, as many fear, but it may make cartoon film production much easier, less expensive, and even more exciting —to the benefit of cartoon filmmakers and cartoon film fans everywhere.

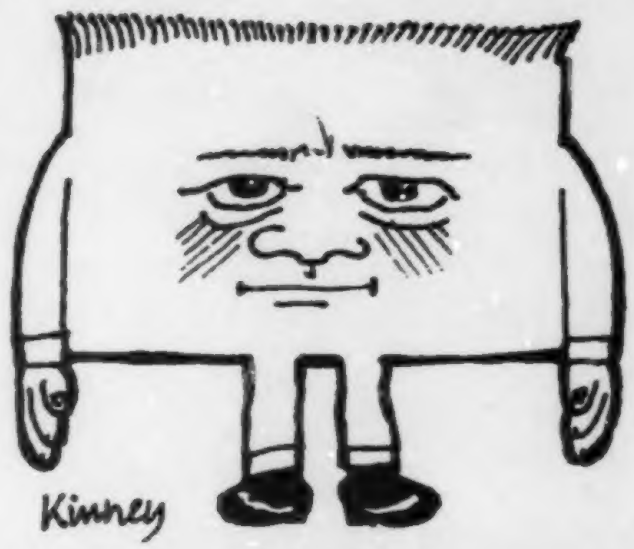
(Continued from Page 3)

Avery says that Bugs needn't have been a rabbit, but could have been a bird. But he made what was in effect a cartoon with Bugs as a bird ("The Crackpot Quail") and it didn't work. So much for that.

The point is, the Clampett interview in FUNNYWORLD No. 12 is not this sort of interview, and neither are the other interviews that will be appearing in the magazine. Before preparing a final, edited version of a transcript, I have done as much "checking" as possible, short of going on what lawyers call a "fishing expedition" by sending copies to anyone who might disagree with something in it. The transcript is then submitted to the subject of the interview, for whatever changes—corrections, additions, deletions—he may wish to make. If I have questions, I ask them. If questions remain unresolved, or if conflicting versions of an event exist, then there will be footnotes to the interview, as there are in this issue.

This must have been the handle the critics of the Clampett interview needed. The interview has no footnotes; it has none of the scholarly trappings, no "passion for accuracy in the lower margins." There should have been footnotes, for two reasons: (1) to emphasize that the interview is, after all, one man's version of how things happened, and not a definitive history, and (2) to make life harder for Clampett's detractors (although some of them have made it plain that their "passion for inaccuracy" is so great that nothing will deter them).

But what footnotes should there have been? Clampett discusses aspects of the Warner studio's history that have never been dealt with before in print, so far as I know (I'm not counting newspaper articles like those that say Friz Freleng "spent twenty-five years heading the animation division at Warner Brothers during which he created such cartoon folklore as Bugs Bunny, Sylvester and Tweetie Pie, Porky Pig and the Road Runner ["Cecil Smith, Los Angeles TIMES, July 8, 1969]). Moreover, Clampett himself engaged in "checking" on a massive scale, matching his memories against those of most of the other persons involved. This was no idle exercise. In one instance, Clampett cut a section from the interview because another person remembered things differently; I have since learned, from some independent checking, that Clampett's version is almost certainly correct. He deleted another anecdote—the most plausible account I've heard of the events in question—because he had



been unable to check the details with a Warner story man. In addition, Clampett provided a mass of documentary evidence for his version of events; some of it is reproduced with the interview.

This is not to say that Clampett's interview is entirely accurate, despite our efforts and those of Milt Gray, FUNNYWORLD's associate editor. Bob Clampett himself has pointed out some minor errors, and it's possible there are others. But what Bob Clampett has told me in our interview and our correspondence dovetails with what I have seen on the screen—in the cartoons themselves—and with what little documentary evidence I can trust. Until someone comes along with some stronger evidence to the contrary, Im going to operate on the assumption that his version of the events at the Warner cartoon studio is substantially correct.

One more point remains to be made. Any controversy over these interviews should not obscure their purpose: to help us see more clearly what is on the screen, and to strip away our preconceptions about cartoons. What is on the screen is most important, after all. If it weren't for that, there not only wouldn't be any interviews, there wouldn't be any FUNNYWORLD.

KRAZY KAT

The piece on Krazy Kat by Bill Blackbeard that was originally scheduled for this issue has been published instead in the March 1971 issue (Vol. 4, No. 4) of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, available for sixty cents from Leland Sapiro, 40 University Station, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Highly recommended.

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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of FUNNYWORLD will include interviews with Mel Blanc and Billy Bletcher, as part of a feature on cartoon voices; the concluding half of the Bob Clampett interview; an article on French "funny animals" by Fred Patten; an article on the early days of animation by veteran animator and story man I. Klein, and the eighth installment of the Barks bibliography. Plus some other things.

As of this writing, my wife and I plan to visit the Los Angeles area in May, and we will record a half dozen or more interviews with people in animation and the comics while we're there.

—MIKE BARRIER

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